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LINCOLN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA



CHIEF EDITOR
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INTRODUCTION

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN MUSIC

IN regard to the question, At what point can the history of modern music strictly be said to begin? few authorities, probably, would wholly agree; but one thing may be taken as certain, that for its beginnings we must look far back into the mists of the Middle Ages, when history is barely distinguishable from romance, and fact and fiction stand side by side. First of all it is necessary to find out precisely what we mean by modern as opposed to medieval music, and in what essential points the one differs from the other.

In a word, then, the main characteristics of modern music as opposed to medieval are rhythm, harmony, and the key system. The evolution of our modern system of harmony from the weird "organum" of Hucbald, and of our keys from the ecclesiastical modes, was so gradual that it is impossible to fix upon any date as the precise moment when one gave way definitely to the other.

The idea of rhythm is, of course, as old as the human race itself. The primitive efforts of a savage to

give musical expression to his feelings are rhythmical without being musical, and the idea of melody is a far later and more advanced development. Yet, in spite of the hoary antiquity of rhythm, what we may call its artistic employment is of comparatively recent growth, and it is the use of rhythm in this sense that forms one of the main characteristics of modern as opposed to medieval music. To the union of rhythm with harmony modern music owes its birth, and it is to the first dawn of an attempt to incorporate these two mighty forces that we must look if we wish to date the beginnings of modern music.

From the time of St. Ambrose onward the river of music flowed in two channels, parallel but independent. The course of ecclesiastical music under the leaden sway of the Church was so little removed from actual stagnation that it was not until the tenth century that the first feeble attempts at harmony were made by Hucbald, and it took another five hundred years to arrive at even such mastery of counterpoint as is exhibited by the composers of the fifteenth century. Meanwhile, the music of the people pursued its way independent of ecclesiastical influence. Ignored or at any rate despised by the monks, the self-elected guardians of intellectual development, it flourished wherever men had hearts to feel and voices to sing.

The folk-songs of the Middle Ages, which happy accident has preserved to us, have all the freshness, melody, and rhythmic force that the Church music of the period is so conspicuously without. Nothing can express more vividly the narrow outlook upon life of the medieval Church than the fact that this rich store

of music ready to every man's hand should have been allowed, so to speak, to run to waste. Yet from time to time some holy brother, less dehumanized than his fellows, had glimpses of the musical possibilities of folk-song. In England, for instance, far back in the thirteenth century, a monk of Reading took the lovely folk-song, "Sumer is icumen in," and, with a grasp of the principles of counterpoint which for that period is nothing short of amazing, made of it a round for four voices upon a drone bass given to two voices more. He even went so far as to hallow it to the service of the Church by fitting sacred words to the music. Whether it was sung in the choir of Reading Abbey or not we cannot say, but if it was it ought certainly to have revolutionized Church music on the spot, for after singing that liquid and lovely melody, harmonized with so much charm, to go back to dreary plain chant and the ear-lacerating harmonies of the "organum" must have been, one would think, more than even a thirteenth-century monk could endure.

However, both as an example of folk-song being used as the foundation of Church music and as a contrapuntal triumph, "Sumer is icumen in" appears to have been an isolated phenomenon. Nothing like it of the same period has been preserved. Certainly it cannot be taken as typical of any tendency of the time toward a more natural and truthful method of expression. In the thirteenth century the epoch of freedom was still far away. If we compare "Sumer is icumen in" with the Tournay mass, which was written about a hundred years later, we find ourselves back once more in the dismal darkness of the Middle Ages. In this mass, written for three voices by some

unknown Fleming, there is very little advance on the earliest strivings toward harmonic expression of the tenth century. Hucbald's system of consecutive fourths and fifths—the so-called organum—is still in full swing, and the result to our ears is indescribably hideous.

A century later came Willem Dufay, one of the most important names in the history of early music, who was a contemporary of the English Dunstable and of the Burgundian Gilles Binchois. With Dufay the influence of popular upon ecclesiastical music first takes definite shape. He wrote masses which are founded upon melodies associated with popular songs, a practice which, though it afterward led to strange and scandalous developments, unquestionably had the immediate effect of giving life to the dry bones of Church music. Further, we may note in the music of Dufay and his period a feeling for definite rhythm such as could only have been produced by the influence of popular music. Modern music was now fairly started upon its career. The generation that succeeded Dufay, of which Okeghem may be taken as a typical figure, had an unmistakable feeling for sheer musical beauty, and we find the composers of his day actually attempting to describe the sight and sounds of nature in tones of music. By the side of these interesting aspirations there was a disheartening tendency toward cleverness for its own sake. Okeghem and his fellows were never so happy as when inventing abstruse "canons"—musical puzzles which taxed the resources of the most learned to solve. Nevertheless, these exercises could not but give technical dexterity, and as a matter of fact during this

period the mechanical side of music was developed to an astonishing extent.

In the middle of the fifteenth century Josquin des Près was born, the first man who can properly be called a great composer in something like the modern acceptation of the term. In Josquin's music there is a beauty which can be appreciated without any reference to the man's position in the history of music. Josquin is the first musical composer who gives a modern hearer the impression that he knows how to get the effects at which he is aiming. The purely pioneer stage of musical development is over. For the first time we are in the presence of an artist. A glance at Josquin's music reveals the importance of his position with regard to the development of modern music. He shows us for the first time a highly gifted composer consciously blending popular and ecclesiastical music. From the popular he gets his freshness of melody and his sense of rhythm, from the ecclesiastical his knowledge of the principles of harmony and counterpoint. In his secular music, in the part songs and canzonets of which he was practically the inventor, we find what are obviously harmonized versions of popular airs, little gems of melody such as "Petite Camusette" which are as entrancing now as on the day he wrote them. And in his sacred music the popular influence is scarcely less noticeable. Take, for example, the "Ave Maria," which has been printed by M. Charles Bordes in his "Anthologie des maîtres religieux primitifs," and compare it with a motet by Dufay or Dunstable, written only a generation earlier. Instead of the long unrhythmical sweep of the Gregorian tunes, we have short crisp phrases, sometimes treated canoni-

cally, but often harmonized in simple chords, just in the modern fashion. The motet, too, is constructed in a curiously advanced style, the flow of the piece being broken by a delightful little passage in triple time, in which the influence of popular music is unmistakable.

The importance of Josquin's work was speedily proved by the generation that succeeded him. Willaert in Venice, and Jannequin in Paris, to name only two of his pupils, carried his tradition far and wide. In England, where general progress was retarded by the Wars of the Roses, the music of the early part of the sixteenth century shows little trace of Josquin's influence, but in other European countries the iron traditions of Church music began to yield at the touch of popular song. In Germany folk-tunes, such as "Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen," were openly annexed by Luther and the Reformed Church, and used as hymns, a proceeding akin to that of the Salvation Army in our day. In Italy the invasion of the Netherlanders was followed by the establishment of music schools, that of Goudimel at Rome, where Palestrina was a pupil, being the most famous. At Venice Adrian Willaert is said to have introduced antiphonal writing into Church music, fired thereto by the presence of two organs in St. Mark's Church, of which he was organist; but it is only necessary to glance at Josquin's music, the "Ave Maria," for instance, to which reference has already been made, to find there the germs of antiphonal writing, as indeed of much else that is attributed to a later age. The sixteenth century saw the rise of the madrigal, which with its offshoots, the canzone, the balletto (the latter designed for dancing as well as singing), the villanella, and other delightful

forms of unaccompanied vocal music, speedily gained wide popularity in Italy, and before the end of the century in England as well.

In music of this kind we find not only the most brilliant display of technique, but an ever-growing feeling for musical beauty. Allied to this was a rudimentary taste for realistic effects, taking form in an attempt to echo the sounds of nature and of human life, at first purely imitative, as in Gombert's musical imitation of bird-calls and Jannequin's famous "Bataille de Marignan," and afterward more artistic, as in Luca Marenzio's lovely madrigal, "Scaldava il sol," with its chirping grasshoppers, or his still more beautiful "Strider faceva," with its imitation of shepherds' pipes, or the numerous "cuckoo" pieces by English composers, in which the bird's cry is used as a definite musical motive with admirable effect.

Experiments of this kind led naturally to innovations in harmony, and long before the end of the sixteenth century composers began to be uneasy in the fetters of the modal system. The process of development which ended in the Church modes being replaced by our modern key system was very gradual; in fact, it was not until the age of Bach that the older system ceased to exercise some sort of influence upon music, but by the beginning of the seventeenth century the battle was practically over. All through the sixteenth century the composers of Italy and the Netherlands were continually enlarging the borders of permissible harmony, and every innovation meant a nail in the coffin of the modal system. The increasing use of accidentals, which in the strict days of the modal system were only permitted with many restrictions, and the

gradual acquisition of the principles of modulation had the result of effacing the subtle distinctions which existed between the various modes. The laws of evolution worked here as consistently as in the animal kingdom. The fittest of the modes survived and became the major and minor scales of the new key system; while the others, though lingering for a while in Church music, soon ceased to have any vital influence upon the development of music.

The English composers of the Elizabethan age were among the hardiest innovators of the period. Not only were they continually making experiments in harmony, often with hideous if interesting results, but they appear to have been in advance of their Italian and Netherlandish contemporaries in their grasp of the principles of modulation. The attempts of Byrd and Orlando Gibbons to express the emotions of pity and terror by crude violations of the accepted rules of harmony are among the first signs of a revolt against the laws which governed the polyphonic school; while in the madrigals of Wilbye we find a consummate ease of technique and a graceful flow of modulation such as are rare even in the most accomplished Italian writers of the period, and are certainly not to be found in the productions of the Netherlandish school, at any rate before the days of Sweelinck. But in spite of the beauty of the English madrigals, it is in the sacred music of the Italian masters that we find the most perfect utterance of the time, and of all the Italians the most gifted was Palestrina, whose name stands for all that is best and purest in the music of the Church, in whose development he played so striking and so formative a part.

THE SECULARIZATION OF MUSIC

The opening of the seventeenth century saw a revolution in music such as has never since been paralleled. With Palestrina and his school, music, as it then was known, reached a climax of perfection beyond which progress was scarcely conceivable. But the productions of this school, though perfect in degree, were narrow in kind. The Church musicians of the sixteenth century, with all their highly wrought technique, worked in a restricted field. The genius of their age tended to expansion and discovery. The result was unavoidable, though it came, as it seems to us, with strange suddenness. Leaving behind them, as it were, the gorgeous palace so carefully erected by generations of earnest workers, the new generation of musicians set forth boldly upon an unknown and stormy ocean, in craft ill-built and without rudder or compass. That in time they arrived at the wished-for port was due certainly to no care or forethought on their part, but rather to the happy genius of the Italian race for adapting itself to circumstances and circumstances to itself.

As a matter of fact the revolution was by no means so sudden or so drastic as it now appears to us. In spite of the new departure which music took in the early years of the seventeenth century, the old school lived on under the wing of the Church for many years, at first untouched by the revolutionary ideas of secular composers and afterward only gradually affected by them. But the rise of opera, of instrumental music, and in fact of secular music as a separate entity gave

a new complexion to the whole world of music. The circumstances of the new departure would surprise us were they not repeated in almost every revolution of the kind. The founders of the secular school were resolved to make an entirely fresh start. Their primitive efforts owed nothing to the work of their predecessors. They had ready to hand a musical organization of exquisite complexity and consummate finish. They ignored it altogether.

The little band of Florentines who set themselves to create the new music worked as if unconscious that a thousand years of development lay behind them. They had no science and no experience. Their first strivings after expression are pathetically ineffective. By the side of the majestic oratory of Palestrina their works appear like the incomprehensible gibberish of childhood. Yet the truth was in them, and from the humble germ that they planted sprang one of the noblest developments of music. But before the fathers of opera were justified of their offspring, a weary path of experiment had to be traversed. Unlike many sister forms of art, opera had to work out its own salvation. Printing and oil-painting sprang full-grown from birth. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the first book printed, the Mazarin Bible, and the first great picture painted in oils, Hubert and Jan van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb," for beauty of conception and perfection of execution have never been surpassed; but it was many years before opera became even articulate; even now, after three hundred years of incessant development, it is easy to believe that the zenith of its achievement has not yet been reached.

Opera, like so many other things, owed its foundation largely to accident. When, late in the sixteenth century, a small band of Florentine enthusiasts proposed to themselves the task of reviving the lost glories of Greek drama, nothing was farther from their thoughts than the creation of a new art-form. They worked upon what they believed to be antiquarian lines; they wrote plays, and because they fancied that the Greek drama was sung or rather chanted in a kind of accompanied recitative, they decided to perform their plays in the same way. Their first efforts have very little musical value. They are almost entirely set to a bare monotonous recitative, varied at rare intervals by simple passages of choral writing and short instrumental interludes. From beginning to end there is nothing that can be called a tune, and the accompaniment merely supports the voice by occasional chords contributed by a harpsichord and three instruments of the lute type.

It was in 1600 that Cavalieri produced the first oratorio, his "Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo," which was performed at Rome in the Oratory of San Filippo de' Neri. In general structure Cavalieri's work resembles that of his Florentine contemporaries, but it has decidedly more musical interest. The solo parts and the choruses are more expressive, and the instrumental sections are considerably more elaborate. Unfortunately Cavalieri died in the year in which his oratorio was produced, and little attempt seems to have been made to follow up his initial success until the time of Carissimi, whose oratorios are an interesting attempt to graft the new dramatic style upon the rich and solid polyphony of past ages. At Florence,

on the other hand, the seed fell upon good ground, but no definite advance can be traced until the appearance on the scene of Claudio Monteverde.

Monteverde was the first trained musician who devoted himself to the new music. He had been thoroughly grounded in the traditions of the contrapuntal school. Had he fallen upon a dull, pedantic era when everything that had a tinge of novelty was derided, he would have accomplished little or nothing. But the way, in many respects, had been prepared for him, and his accomplishment, as our sketch of his life shows, was great. His success soon found him followers, of whom Cavalli is one of the most famous. In the matter of form he improved upon Monteverde. In Cavalli's works, as in the later operas of Monteverde, we begin to pass from the first merely experimental stage of opera. Cavalli avoids the pitfalls into which Monteverde's inexperience had led him, but on the other hand his music has not the concentrated dramatic force of his predecessor. Still Cavalli is an important figure in the history of music. In his operas we find for the first time a regularly developed aria, varying the monotony of the interminable recitative. He had the true Venetian love of color, and he tried to make his orchestra give musical significance to the sights and sounds of nature, such as the murmuring of rivers or the sighing of the winds.

Cesti was another of Monteverde's most famous followers. In his time opera had advanced still farther on the path of development. Cesti's music is tuneful and charming, and many of his airs would probably be as successful now in pleasing public taste as on the day they were written. In his works we find for the

first time the da capo regularly used, that is to say the repetition of the first part of an air after the end of the second part. Excellent as this invention was in giving cohesion to the musical fabric of an opera, it was much abused by subsequent writers, and is largely responsible for the degradation of opera in the eighteenth century to the level of a concert on the stage.

In Cesti's time the rivalry between the various opera houses of Venice was very keen, and it is easy to believe that the managers tried to outbid each other in the favor of the public by staging their pieces in the most magnificent manner. At any rate the accounts of the scenery used sound very elaborate. Operas were still an important feature at court festivals, and here, as in the court masques in England, gorgeous staging was a matter of course. Engravings still survive of the scenery used when Cesti's opera "Il pomo d'oro" was produced at Vienna in 1668, which give some idea of the elaborate nature of the entertainment. At Parma the old theater still stands in the Farnese palace, just as it did in the seventeenth century, but in such a wrecked and dismantled condition that it is not easy to realize what it looked like in all the splendor of a court festival. Nevertheless those who have visited Parma, and have read the accounts that survive of the magnificent performances given under the auspices of the Farnese family, can well amuse themselves by trying to recreate the scene in imagination.

It would serve no good purpose here to enumerate the composers who, during the seventeenth century, furnished Italy with operas. Their name is legion. Throughout the country the musical activity was amazing. Hardly a town was without its opera house,

and the libraries of Italian cities furnish convincing proofs of the enormous quantity of music produced at this period. What may be called the first period of Italian opera culminated in Alessandro Scarlatti, a composer of extraordinary genius and fertility, who definitely established the form of Italian opera which prevailed during the eighteenth century. Scarlatti found opera still to some extent in the tentative stage; he left it a highly developed art-form of exquisitely ordered proportion, an instrument capable of expressing human emotion with beautiful certainty and force. Historians, noting the fact that after Scarlatti's day Italian opera soon degenerated into a concert upon the stage with little or no dramatic significance, have found in his works the seeds of decadence, and have not hesitated to describe Monteverde's primitive struggles after expression as more "dramatic" than the ordered beauty of Scarlatti's airs, without seeing that the germs of all that Scarlatti accomplished are to be found in Monteverde, though often in so undeveloped a state as to be barely recognizable.

It is a common error, especially among those whose knowledge of music is bounded by the works of Wagner, to suppose that the duty of operatic composers is to give musical expression to the ordinary inflections of the human voice. This is entirely to misread the convention upon which opera is founded. When song has been substituted for speech, realism of this kind is out of the question. Music like architecture depends for its effect upon the beauty of ordered design and proportion. The man who built the first log cabin probably took as his model the cave in which his ancestors had dwelt, but we do not therefore judge

houses according to their resemblance to caves. It probably required a greater effort of creative genius to build the first log cabin than to build Westminster Abbey, but that does not prevent us from regarding Westminster Abbey as the finer work of art. Monteverde was a man of extraordinary genius, and the value of his work in the history of modern music cannot be overestimated, but to speak of his music as a great artistic accomplishment is to misunderstand the man and his aims altogether. He would have written like Scarlatti if he could. His career shows a constant striving toward that goal. Any one who compares his later works with "Orfeo" must see the enormous advance in form which he made during his lifetime.

The tendencies of modern opera toward formlessness and so-called "dramatic truth" and "realism" have blinded critics to the main principles upon which opera is founded, so that a distinguished modern writer actually talks about Monteverde "regarding his early efforts in the histrionic and dramatic direction as a forlorn hope," and says that Cavalli "drifted away from his dramatic ideals in the direction of technical artistic finish and clearness of musical form," as though a dramatic ideal could be better expressed by imperfect than by perfect technique, by chaotic confusion than by assured mastery of form.

Scarlatti carried opera in Italy to heights far beyond the ken of his predecessors, but meanwhile further developments of the new art were claiming attention beyond the Alps. Lulli brought Italian traditions to Paris, where he grafted them upon the masques which already were popular at the French court. Lulli was an extremely clever man, and he speedily divined the

instincts of the French people in musical matters, and suited his music to their peculiar taste. In Italy the trend of opera was more and more in the direction of sheer musical beauty, regardless of the meaning of the words, but the logical French mind insisted upon knowing what the music was all about. Thus we find that recitative retains an important place in Lulli's operas while set airs are few and far between.

Vocalization was far less cultivated in France than in Italy, and long after Lulli's time French singers were famous for their ugly voices and bad singing. Dancing, on the other hand, for which the Italians seem to have cared comparatively little, was much appreciated in France, and elaborate ballets are a prominent feature of Lulli's operas. Thus in Lulli's hands French opera soon developed into a distinctive art-form, very stiff and majestic compared with the melodious and flexible music of Italian writers, but vigorous and intelligent, and lending itself well to the elaborate stage display in which the French then as now delighted. Historically, Lulli is also interesting as having, if not invented, at any rate perfected what is known as the French form of overture, a solemn introduction followed by a quick movement in a fugal style and concluding with a dance, which was afterward carried to the highest conceivable pitch of perfection by Handel.

In Germany the development of opera was comparatively unimportant. The wars of the seventeenth century interfered with the progress of all kinds of art, and though performances of opera were occasionally given at German courts, the new art took no real root in the country, until the opening of the Hamburg

opera house in 1678 and the rise of Keiser. Even then operas were given mainly in Italian, and the style of the music was for the most part thoroughly Italian, though occasionally modified by German influence in minor details.

The development of the new music in England will be shown in the sketch of Purcell contained in the present volume, wherein also the biographies of the great composers of the modern world present to the reader in practically a chronological order the lives and works of the masters through whom mainly the triumphs of musical art have been achieved.

Some compilers of works on great composers limit their lists to a few—less than twenty, perhaps—of the supreme names in musical history. In the present series the list has been extended to embrace a much larger number, to all of whom the word great, which is a relative term, may be, in one degree or another, justly applied.

PALESTRINA

(——?-1594)



GREAT COMPOSERS

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA

THIS great pioneer among masters of music was born of humble parents at Palestrina in the Campagna of Rome. The exact date of his birth is unknown. The inscription on an old portrait of him in the muniment room of the Pontifical Chapel at the Quirinal states that he died at about eighty years of age in 1594, and if this were true he would have been born in 1514 or 1515. The Abbé Baini interprets a doubtful phrase used by his son Igino, in the dedication of a posthumous volume of his masses to Pope Clement VIII, to mean that his father died at the age of seventy in the year 1594. The truth is that the exact date of his birth cannot be stated. The public registers of Palestrina, which would probably have certified it, were destroyed by the soldiery of Alva in 1557, and no private documents have been discovered which make good their loss.

It is certain, however, that at a very early age, and probably about the year 1540, he came to Rome to study music. Toward this career the different capitals of Italy offered many inducements to boys with musi-

cal aptitudes, and it is said that Palestrina owed his reception into a school to his being overheard singing in the street by the maestro of the Chapel of Santa Maria Maggiore. The authenticity of this anecdote is at least doubtful. Palestrina, at all events as a man, had but a poor voice. The statement, made by many historians, that Palestrina was a pupil of Claudio Goudimel, a Fleming, who had opened a public school of music in Rome, has been controverted by F. X. Haberl, who may be considered the most reliable writer upon the subject of Palestrina and Dufay.

In 1551 Rubino finally retired from the teachership of music in the Capella Giulia of the Vatican, and in September of that year Palestrina, who during the eleven years that had elapsed since his arrival in Rome must have given good proofs of his quality, was elected to the vacant post.

In 1554 he published his first volume, containing four masses for four voices and one for five. These he dedicated to Pope Julius III. It is worth saying, in order to show the dominance of the Flemish school in Italy, that this was the first volume of music that had ever been dedicated by an Italian to a Pope. It was printed in Rome by the Brothers Dorici in 1554; a second edition of it was published by their successors in 1572, and a third by Gardano of Rome in 1591. In the last edition Palestrina included a number of his masses.

About this time Palestrina married. Of his wife we know nothing more than that her Christian name was Lucrezia, that she bore to her husband four sons, and that after a long married life, which seems to have been marked by uncommon affection, she died in the year 1580.

In 1555 Julius III, mindful of the dedication of the book of masses, offered their author a place among the twenty-four collegiate singers of his private chapel. The pay was greater than that which he was receiving as maestro in the Vatican. Palestrina was poor, and he had already four children. On the other hand he was a layman, he had a bad voice, and he was a married man. For each of these reasons his appointment was a gross violation of the constitutions of the college, and a high-handed and unwarrantable act upon the part of Julius. All this Palestrina knew, and to his credit he hesitated to accept the offer; but his desire to do his best for his family combined with a fear of offending his patron to enforce his acceptance. He resigned his old post, and on January 13, 1555, was formally admitted as one of the Pontifical Singers.

In the course of this year he published his first volume of madrigals for four voices. His intention to dedicate this to Julius was frustrated by the death of that pontiff, which took place while they were still in the press. Marcellus II, who succeeded Julius III in the papacy, died after a reign of twenty-three days, and was succeeded in his turn by Paul IV. Paul was a reformer, and one of the first acts of his reign was to weed the College of Pontifical Singers of those members whose qualifications would not bear scrutiny. Among these was undoubtedly Palestrina, and he was dismissed accordingly. The Pope tempered his severity by assigning to each of the dismissed singers a pension, but not the less did his expulsion seem ruin to the anxious and oversensitive Palestrina. He straightway took to his bed, and for some weeks lay prostrate under an attack of nervous fever. As might have been

foreseen, his despair was premature. A young man who had so speedily and so surely left his mark upon the music of his generation was not likely to starve for want of employment. Within two months he was invited to the post of maestro di capella at the Lateran. He was careful to inquire at the Vatican whether in the event of his obtaining fresh preferment he would be allowed to keep his pension, and it was only upon receiving a favorable answer that he accepted the proffered office, upon which he entered in October, 1555.

Palestrina remained at the Lateran until February, 1561, when he was transferred to a similar post at Santa Maria Maggiore. At the last-named basilica he remained for ten years, until the month of March, 1571, when he was once more elected to his old office of maestro at the Vatican.

The fifteen years which thus elapsed since the rigorous reform of Paul IV had set him for a moment adrift upon the world, had been years of brilliant mental activity in Palestrina. His genius had freed itself from the influence of the pedantry by which it had been nursed and schooled, and had taken to itself the full form and scope of its own specialty and grandeur. His first volume had been full of all the vagaries and extravagances of the Flemish school, and in it the meaning of the words and the intention of the music had alike been subordinated, according to the evil fashion of his epoch, to the perplexing subtleties of science. But beyond this first volume few traces of such faults are to be found. His second volume, "The Lamentations of Jeremiah," for four voices, shows more than the mere germs of his future manner; and although the third, a set of "Magnificats" for five and

six voices, is full of science and learning, it is of science and learning set free. A hymn, "Crux Fidelis," and a collection of "Improperia," all for eight voices, written in 1560, obtained speedily so great a renown, that Paul IV, who had dismissed him, could not restrain himself from asking to have them sung at the Vatican, and after hearing them had them added at once to the collection of the Apostolic Chapel. The publication of all these works was made anonymously, and was completed within the six years of Palestrina's stay at the Lateran.

The ten years during which he remained at Santa Maria Maggiore formed at once the most brilliant decade in the life of Palestrina and one of the most remarkable epochs in the history of his art. It is not easy for us at this moment to realize the position of Church music at the date of the Council of Trent. It may be said that it had lost all relation to the services which it was supposed to illustrate. Bristling with inapt and distracting artifices, it completely overlaid the situations of the mass; while founded, as it was for the most part, upon secular melodies, it was actually sung, except by two or three prominent voices in the front row of the choir, to the words with which its tunes were most naturally and properly associated. It was usual for the most solemn phrases of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, and Agnus to blend along the aisles of the basilica with the unedifying refrains of the lewd chansons of Flanders and Provence, while ballad and other dance music were played every day upon the organ. Other irregularities and corruptions hardly less flagrant were common among the singers; and the general condition of affairs was such that a resolution

as to the necessity of reform in Church music, which very nearly took the shape of a decree for its abandonment altogether, was solemnly passed in a full sitting of the Council of Trent.

In 1563 Pius IV issued a commission to eight cardinals authorizing them to take all necessary steps to carry out the resolution of the council. Among these, two of the most active were the Cardinals Borromeo and Vitellozzi. At their instance Palestrina was commissioned to write a mass as a type of what the music of the sacred office should be. With a noble mixture of modesty and energy the great composer declined to trust the fate of his art to one work. He composed a series of three masses and sent them without titles to the Cardinal Borromeo. It is supposed that he feared to attach names to them lest he should arouse by an ill-judged choice of words either powerful prejudices or unfounded fears. They were performed in the first instance with the greatest care at the house of the Cardinal Vitellozzi. The verdict of the audience assembled to hear them was enthusiastic and final. Upon the first two, praises lavish enough were bestowed; but by the third, afterward known as the mass "Papæ Marcelli," all felt that the future style and destiny of sacred art were once for all determined. The Pope ordered a special performance of it in the Apostolic Chapel; and at the close of the service the enraptured Pontiff declared that it must have been some such music that the Apostle of the Apocalypse heard sung by the triumphant hosts of angels in the New Jerusalem. There was a general agreement of prelate and singer that Palestrina had at last produced the archetype of ecclesiastical song.

The post of composer to the Pontifical Choir was created for Palestrina by the Pope in honor of this noble achievement, and so the amends, if any were needed, from the Vatican to its dismissed chapel singer, were finally and handsomely made. But the jealousy of the singers themselves, which had been evinced upon his original appointment as one of their number in 1555, was by no means extinct. His present appointment was received in surly silence, and upon the death of Pius, in August, 1565, their discontent took a more open and aggressive form. The new Pope, however, Michele Ghislieri, who had taken the title of Pius V, confirmed the great musician in his office, as did the six succeeding pontiffs during whose reigns he lived.

The production of this series of masses by no means represents the mental activity of Palestrina during the period between 1555 and 1571. In 1562, in gratitude for his monthly pension, he had sent for the use of the Apostolic Chapel two motetti, "Beatus Laurentius" and "Estote fortes in bello," and a mass for six voices, entitled "Ut Re Mi Fa Sol La." To the Cardinal Pio di Carpi, who had shown him some personal kindness, he had dedicated a volume of graceful motetti, which were printed in 1563, and were republished in several other editions.

In 1565 the Cardinal Pacacco, Spanish representative at the papal court, intimated that the dedication to Philip II of a work by Palestrina would be pleasing to that monarch. The musician consulted his friend Cardinal Vitellozzi, and arranged the dedication of a volume which should contain the famous mass, which he then christened "Papæ Marcelli," with four others

for four voices, and two for five voices. These, with an appropriate inscription, were forwarded to the Spanish king. They were printed as Palestrina's second volume of masses, in 1569, and in a fresh edition in 1598. A year or two afterward he published a third volume of masses, which he also inscribed to Philip. It need hardly be said that a message of thanks was all that he ever received in return for so splendid a homage from the heartless, wealthy, and penurious bigot at the Escurial.

In an enumeration of the works of Palestrina, published during this period of his life, we must not forget to mention five secular madrigals of his which Vincenzo Galilei, father of the astronomer, and a musical virtuoso of no mean order, set for the lute, and included in a collection of similar compositions which he published under the title of "Fronimo," through Scoto of Venice, in 1568, and again in 1584.

Somewhere about the year 1560 Palestrina had acquired the patronage of the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, and for many years subsequently was treated by him with much kindness. As an acknowledgment of this he dedicated to this personage his first regular volume of motetti, which was published at Rome in 1569. This remarkable volume contains several works of the very highest class. It was in 1570 that he published his third volume of masses, dedicated to Philip II. It contains four masses for four voices.

We have now briefly surveyed the works of Palestrina down to the date of his reappointment to the Vatican. He had accepted the post from a love for the basilica in whose service his first fame had been gained. But he suffered what to him must have been a serious

loss of income when he left Santa Maria Maggiore. For this, however, he obtained some compensation in his appointment as maestro di capella to the new oratory founded by S. Filippo Neri, his confessor and intimate friend. But at no time had Palestrina any large share of worldly prosperity. We never hear that he derived any profit from the sale of his works; nor, indeed, can it be supposed that at that epoch there was much money to be made by musical publications. He gave lessons for a short period in the school carried on by Nanini; but it is not at all likely that he did so with any other object than to assist his friend, or that he accepted any payment for his assistance. Throughout the whole course of his career he only taught seven private pupils, and three of these were his own sons. It is probable therefore that, save for a few exceptional gifts from patrons and a little temporary employment as director of concerts, he had to subsist upon the very humble salaries attached to the permanent offices which he held.

In addition to this chronic penury he had to endure stroke after stroke of the severest domestic affliction. His three promising sons, Angelo, Ridolfo, and Silla, all died one after the other, just as they had given substantial proofs of their intellectual inheritance of their father's genius; in 1580 his wife died; and his remaining son, Igino, was a wild and worthless man. Yet neither poverty nor sorrow could quench the fire of his genius, nor check the march of his industry.

No sooner was he reinstated at the Vatican than he sent a present of two masses, one for five and the other for six voices, to the Papal Choir. The subject of the first of these was taken from one of the mo-

tetti in his first volume, "O Magnum Mysterium"; that of the other from the old hymn, "Veni Creator Spiritus," of the Libri Corali. They are in his finest and most matured manner, and were probably composed in the year of their presentation. They have never been printed, but they may be seen in the Collection of the Vatican. In the following year, 1572, he published at Rome, probably with Alessandro Gardano, his second volume of motetti. It was in this volume that he included four motetti written by his three sons. It was dedicated to one of the most persistent of his friends, the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, who died that same year.

Inferior, on the whole, to its predecessors, was the third volume of motetti, which he printed in 1575, with a dedication to Alfonso II, Duke of Ferrara, and cousin to his lost friend the Cardinal Ippolito. There are, however, certain brilliant exceptions to the low level of the book; notably the motetti for eight voices, which are finer than any which he had yet written for the same number of singers, and include the well-known and magnificent compositions "Surge illuminare Jerusalem" and "Hodie Christus natus est."

In this year, 1575, the year of the Jubilee, an incident occurred which must have made one of the brightest passages in the cloudy life of Palestrina. Fifteen hundred singers from his native town, belonging to the two confraternities of the Crucifix and the Sacrament, came to Rome. They had divided themselves into three choruses. Priests, laymen, boys and ladies went to form their companies; and they made a solemn entry into the city, singing the music of their townsman, with its great creator conducting it at their head.

In the following year, Gregory XIII commissioned Palestrina to revise the "Graduale" and the "Antifonario" of the Latin Church. This was a work of great and somewhat thankless labor. It involved little more than compilation and rearrangement, and on it all the finer qualities of his genius were thrown away. Uncongenial as it was, Palestrina, with unwavering devotion to his art, and to the Church to which he had so absolutely devoted both himself and it, undertook the task. Well aware of its extent, he called to his aid his favorite pupil, Guidetti, and intrusted to him the correction of the "Antifonario." Guidetti carried this part of the work through under the supervision of his master, and it was published at Rome in 1582 under the title "Directorium Chori." The "Graduale," which Palestrina had reserved to himself, he never completed. There is a limit to the perseverance of the most persevering; and the most loving of churchmen and the most faithful of artists fell back here. He seems to have finished a first instalment, but the rest he left less than half done, and the whole was found after his death among his abandoned manuscripts.

The loss of his patron Ippolito d'Este was to some extent made up to Palestrina by the kindness of Giacomo Buoncompagni, nephew (or son) of Gregory XIII, who came to Rome in 1580, to receive nobility at the hands of his relative. He was a great lover of music, and proceeded at once to organize a series of concerts, under the direction of Palestrina. To him Palestrina dedicated a volume of twenty-six madrigals for five voices. Eight of these were composed upon Petrarch's "Canzoni" to the Virgin Mary; the rest were set to miscellaneous sacred words. The publica-

tion of these was followed by that of another volume of motetti for four voices only. Several editions of both works are extant. The madrigals call for no comment; but the volume of motetti is unusually beautiful. They were probably composed in the year of their publication, during the first force of his grief for the loss of Lucrezia; and to this the intensity of their pathos and the choice of the words to which they are written may be ascribed, some of which may well have represented to himself the heart-broken composer mourning by the banks of the Tiber for the lost wife whom he had loved so long.

Upon these, in 1562, followed the fourth in the series of masses for four and five voices, a volume by no means remarkable, save that it was written and dedicated to Gregory at his own request. Palestrina seems to have been aware of its inferiority, and to have resolved to present the Pontiff with something more worthy of them both. He accordingly conceived the idea of composing a series of motetti to words chosen from the Song of Solomon. The execution of these, with the doubtful exception of the Great Mass, was the happiest effort of his genius. In them all his critics and biographers unite to say that he surpassed himself. Flushed with the glorious sense of his success, he carried the book, when completed, in person to Gregory, and laid it at the foot of his chair. It was printed by Gardano in 1584, and so great was its renown that in less than sixty years from the date of its composition it had passed through ten fresh editions at the hands of various publishers.

Palestrina had now arrived at the last decade of his life. In it we can trace no diminution of his industry,

no relaxation in the fiber or fire of his genius. In 1584 he published, and dedicated to Andrea Battore, nephew of Stephen, King of Poland, who had been created a cardinal, his fifth volume of motetti for five voices. It is a volume of unequal merit, but it contains one or two of the rarest examples of the master. Baini, his biographer, admired these so extravagantly as to say that in writing them Palestrina must have made up his mind to consider himself the simple amanuensis of God!

Palestrina had intended to dedicate the last-mentioned volume to the Pope; but the arrival of Battore, and his kindness to him, made him change his mind. In order, however, to atone for such a diversion of homage, he sent to Gregory three masses for six voices. Of these the two first were founded on the subjects of his motets "Viri Galilaei" and "Dum complerentur." They had all the beauties of the earlier works, with the result of the maturity of the author's genius and experience superadded. The third, "Te Deum laudamus," Baini states to be rather heavy, partly owing, perhaps, to the "character of the key" in which it is written, but more, probably, from too servile an adherence to the form of an old Ambrosian hymn on which it is founded.

About this time we notice traces of a popular desire to get hold of the lighter pieces of Palestrina. Francesco Landoni possessed himself, for instance, of copies of the two madrigals "Vestiva i colli" and "Così le chiome mie," which Vincenzo Galilei had arranged for the lute. He printed them in a miscellaneous volume, entitled "Spoglia Amorosa," through Scoto of Venice, in 1585. Gardano of Rome, too,

published a collection of madrigals by sundry composers, under the name of "Dolci Affeti." Among these there was one of Palestrina's, and two or three other stray pieces of his were published in like manner about the same time.

In April, 1585, Gregory died, and was succeeded by Sixtus V. Palestrina made somewhat too much haste to pay his homage to the new Pontiff. A motetto and a mass which he sent to him were so hurriedly composed that on the performance of the mass on Trinity Sunday, Sixtus commented unfavorably. These regrettable productions would have been well lost to sight but for the reckless brutality of Igino, who, looking only to what money they would fetch, published them after his father's death with a bold-faced inscription to Clement VIII. Palestrina atoned for his misdeed by writing forthwith the beautiful mass "Assumpta est Maria in Cœlum." This masterpiece he had just time to get printed off without date or publisher's name—there was no time to make written copies of it—before the Feast of the Assumption. It was performed before Sixtus in Santa Maria Maggiore on that day (August 15). The delight of the Pontiff was unbounded; but his good will took a form which led to the last unpleasant occurrence in Palestrina's life.

It will be remembered that Palestrina had for many years held the position of composer to the Apostolic Chapel. The Pope now conceived the idea of investing him with the title and duties of maestro. He commissioned Antonio Boccapadule, the actual maestro, to bring about the change. At first sight this seems a strange selection of an agent; for it was Boccapadule

who of all others would have to suffer by his own success. It is of course possible that a promise of some higher preferment may have purchased his assistance. Be that as it may, he seems to have set to work with a will. Taking Tommaso Benigni, one of the junior singers, into his confidence, he employed him to sound his brethren. Benigni in a short time announced that there was a respectable number of the college who favored the Pope's views. The event proved that Benigni either misled his employer, or was himself purposely deceived by those to whom he spoke, or else that he augured too freely from one or two stray expressions of half good will. In any case, his report was so encouraging that Boccapadule called a meeting of the college, at which he broached the subject. He was astonished to find an opposition so strong, and expressed with so much warmth, that he not only desisted, but to shield himself he disingenuously laid the whole responsibility of his overtures upon Palestrina. The singers probably knew better than either to believe or to pretend to disbelieve him. But they gave vent to their displeasure by imposing a fine upon the unfortunate Benigni.

At a subsequent meeting Boccapadule, remorseful that his emissary should be made a scapegoat, begged him off, telling his comrades that they had not possessed themselves of the true story. Benigni was accordingly excused his fine; but the Pope, who had become highly incensed at the independent action of his choir, was not appeased by their clemency. He immediately struck off the list of singers four of the more prominent members of the opposition. Two of these he subsequently restored; but the other two re-

mained permanent victims to their expression of a jealousy the vitality of which was a disgrace, not only to themselves, but to the whole body to which they belonged. Palestrina, in order to show a generous content with his old position of compositore to the choir, immediately dowered it with three new masses, two for five voices and another for six; and so drew honor upon himself by an act of courtesy to those by whom a well deserved honor had been so churlishly denied to him. This was characteristic of the master, as we may easily understand.

In the same year, 1586, he paid to Cesare Colonna, Prince of Palestrina, the homage of a dedication. It was of his second volume of madrigals for four voices. Some of these are the best of his secular works. Not so is his contribution to a volume of sonnets by Zuccarini, written in honor of the marriage of Francesco de' Medici and Bianca Cappello and put to music by different composers. Whether or not he set himself deliberately to write down to the level of the poetaster's words, as Baini suggests, or whether, as was natural, they only failed to inspire him, it is not worth while to inquire. The fact is sufficient that Zuccarini and the occasion got all that they deserved but no more.

From this time to his death the materials for his biography resolved themselves into a catalogue of publications and dedications, among which, however, are several of his greatest works—his setting of the "Lamentations of Jeremiah," a notable Magnificat, and the "Stabat Mater," both for eight voices, the "Offertoria totius anni," the "Hymni totius anni," and the masses "Aeterna Christi munera" and "Iste Confes-

sor." With these and numerous other works the aged master busily employed himself in his last years.

But at the beginning of 1594 the end of this indefatigable life was at hand. In January of that year he issued his last publication. It was a collection of thirty "Madrigali spirituali," for five voices, in honor of the Virgin, dedicated to the young Grand Duchess of Tuscany, wife of Ferdinand de' Medici. Of this volume Baini says that it is in the true style of his motetti on the Song of Solomon; and Dr. Burney echoes the praises of his Italian biographer. He had also begun to print his seventh volume of masses to be dedicated to Clement VIII, the last of the Popes who had the honor of befriending him. But while the work was still in the press he was seized with a pleurisy, against the acuteness of which his constitution had no power to contend, and the malady rapidly wore away his physical vitality.

He took to his bed on January 26, and died on February 2. When he felt his end approaching he sent for Filippo Neri, his friend, admirer, counselor, and confessor of many years, and for Igino, the sole and wretched inheritor of his name. As the saint and the scapegrace stood by his bed, he said simply to the latter, "My son, I leave behind me many of my works still unpublished; but thanks to the generosity of my benefactors, the Abbot of Baume, the Cardinal Aldobrandini, and Ferdinand the Grand Duke of Tuscany, I leave with them money enough to get them printed. I charge you to see this done with all speed, to the glory of the Most High God, and for the worship of His holy temple." He then dismissed him with a blessing which he had not merited, and spent

the remaining twenty-four hours of his life in the company of the saintly Neri. It was in his arms that he breathed his last, true, even upon the brink of death, to that sympathy with piety and purity which had drawn him during half a century to devote to their illustration and furtherance all the beauties of his fancy and all the resources of his learning.

Palestrina lived before the day of biographies and interviews, and barely a tradition remains to us of the man in his habit as he lived. But his character is written in his music in unmistakable terms. His works proclaim him a man of exquisite tenderness and of childlike simplicity. In the time of Palestrina the Church of Rome was the chief patron of painting and music, and painters and musicians alike were summoned to devote their principal energies to her glorification; but it is only necessary to compare, let us say, the works of Palestrina and Perugino to realize the difference between work done for the glory of God and work done for the glory of man. Even if we knew nothing whatever of the men it would be impossible not to recognize the fact that Palestrina was working with his heart and Perugino with his head. Both had the same mastery of technique, but the one wrote with an overflowing enthusiasm born of love to God and man, and the other painted for the purpose of making money and of exhibiting his own executive ability to the best advantage.

In the history of music Palestrina represents the culmination of the polyphonic school of vocal music. He wrote no instrumental music, no music for a solo voice. He had not a touch of that revolutionary impulse which drives men upon new paths. He worked

only with existing materials, but he brought music as he knew it to the highest conceivable point of perfection. As his powers developed he found the secret of the true balance between science and expression. In Palestrina we first find the melodious suavity which has since become typical of Italian music.

From a modern point of view Palestrina worked within very narrow limits, but within those limits his command of expression was extraordinary. Such discords as he employed are of the mildest description, and are always carefully prepared, but the effect that they make is extraordinary. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that no more poignantly pathetic setting of the "Stabat Mater" than Palestrina's has ever been written, yet the harmonies employed are almost child-like in their simplicity. It is the perfect proportion of part to whole that is one of the secrets of Palestrina's power, and the perfect adjustment of means to end.

Nothing is more difficult than to describe music and the impressions produced by music in terms of plain prose, and the music of Palestrina in particular is of so delicate a fiber that it is almost impossible to find words in which to paint its distinctive charm. The prevailing note of it is its intense spirituality. Not a touch of earth degrades its celestial rapture. It voices the highest and purest mysticism of the Catholic faith as it never has been voiced before or since. Palestrina seems to view the mysteries of the Christian religion through a golden haze. Its external aspects were nothing to him, its inner meaning everything. The gross materialism of a later day, which emphasizes the physical side of Christ's passion, would have been inex-

pressibly repugnant to him could he have conceived it. His music is inextricably bound up with the words to which it is allied and the acts of adoration which it illustrates. Apart from the services of the Church it loses its essential meaning, but in its proper sphere it still stands as the exemplar of ultimate perfection.

MONTEVERDE

(1568-1643)



CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE

MONTEVERDE, the originator of the modern style of composition, was born at Cremona, Italy, in the year 1568. At a very early period he entered the service of the Duke of Mantua as a violist, showing, from the first, unmistakable signs of a talent which gave good promise of future excellence, and which, before long, met with cordial recognition, not only at the ducal court, but from end to end of Europe.

The youthful violist was instructed in counterpoint by the Duke's maestro di capella, Marc Antonio Ingegneri, a learned musician, and a composer of some eminence, who, if we may judge by the result of his teaching, does not seem to have been blessed, in this instance, with a very attentive pupil. It is, indeed, difficult to believe that Monteverde can ever have taken any real interest in the study of scholastic music. Contrapuntal excellence was not one of his strong points; and he never shines to advantage in music in which it is demanded. His first published work—a book of "Canzonette a tre voci"—printed at Venice in 1584, though clever enough for a youth of sixteen, abounds in irregularities which no teacher of that period could have conscientiously indorsed. And the earlier books of madrigals, by which the canzonette were followed, show no progressive improvement in this respect, but rather the reverse.

The beauty of some of these compositions is of a very high order; yet it is constantly marred by unpleasant progressions which can only have been the result of pure carelessness; for it would be absurd to suppose that such evil-sounding combinations could have been introduced deliberately, and equally absurd to assume that Ingegneri neglected to enforce the rules by the observance of which they might have been avoided.

We must, however, draw a careful distinction between these faulty passages and others of a very different character, which, though they must have been thought startling enough at the time they were written, can only be regarded now as unlearned attempts to reach *per saltum* that new and as yet unheard-of style of beauty for which the young composer was incessantly longing, and to which alone he owes his undoubted claim to be revered, not only as the greatest musician of his own age, but as the inventor of a system of harmony which has remained in uninterrupted use to the present day. Among progressions of this latter class we may instance the numerous suspensions of the dominant seventh, and its inversions, introduced into the cadences of "Stracciami pur il core"—an extremely beautiful madrigal, published in the Third Book (1594). Also an extraordinary chain of suspended sevenths and ninths, in the same interesting work: which, notwithstanding the harshness of its effect, is really free from anything approaching to an infraction of the theoretical laws of counterpoint, except, indeed, that one which forbids the resolution of a discord to be heard in one part while the discord itself is heard in another—and ex-

ceptions to that law may be found in works of much earlier date.

In his Fifth Book of madrigals, printed in 1599, Monteverde grew bolder and, thrusting the time-honored laws of counterpoint aside, struck out for himself that new path which he ever afterward unhesitatingly followed. With the publication of this volume began that deadly war with the polyphonic schools which ended in their utter defeat, and the firm establishment of what we now call modern music. In "Cruda Amarilli," the best known madrigal in this most interesting series, we find exemplifications of nearly all the most important points of divergence between the two opposite systems, not excepting the crucial distinctions involved in the use of the diminished triad, and the unprepared dissonances of the seventh and ninth.

Some modern writers, including Ulibishev and Pierre Joseph Zimmermann, have denied that these passages exhibit any novelty of style—but they are in error. Up to this time, sevenths had been heard only in the form of suspensions, or passing-notes, as in "Stracciami pur il core." The unprepared seventh—the never-failing test by which the ancient school may be distinguished from the modern, the strict style from the free—was absolutely new, and was regarded by contemporary musicians as so great an outrage upon artistic propriety that one of the most learned of them —Giovanni Maria Artusi, of Bologna—published, in the year 1600, a work, entitled "Delle imperfezioni della moderna musica," in which he condemned the unwonted progressions found in "Cruda Amarilli," on the ground that they were altogether opposed to the

nature of legitimate harmony. To this severe critique Monteverde replied by a letter addressed "Agli studiosi lettori," which he prefixed to a later volume of madrigals.

A bitter war now raged between the adherents of the two contending schools. Monteverde endeavored to maintain his credit by a visit to Rome, where he presented some of his ecclesiastical compositions to Pope Clement VIII. But, much as his Church music has been praised by the learned Padre Martini and other well known writers, it is altogether wanting in the freshness which distinguishes the works of the great masters who brought the Roman and Venetian schools to perfection. Labored and hard where it should have been ingenious, and weak where it should have been devotional, it adds nothing to its author's fame, and only serves to show how surely his genius was leading him in another and a very different direction.

Monteverde succeeded Ingegneri as maestro di capella at the ducal court, in the year 1603. In 1607 the Duke's son, Francesco di Gonzaga, contracted an alliance with Margherita, Infanta of Savoy; and, to grace the marriage festival, the new maestro produced, in emulation of Peri's "Euridice," a grand serious opera, called "Arianna," the text of which was supplied by the poet Rinuccini.

The success of this great work was unprecedented. It could scarcely have been otherwise; for all the composer's past experience was brought to bear upon it. The passionate dissonances which had corrupted the madrigal, and were destined, ere long, to prove the destruction of the polyphonic mass, were here

turned to such good account that, in the scene in which the forsaken Ariadne laments the desertion of her faithless lover, they drew tears from every eye. No possible objection could be raised against them now. The censures of Artusi and his colleagues, just though they were, would have lost all their force, had they been directed—which, happily, they were not—against vocal music with instrumental accompaniment. The contrapuntal skill necessary for the successful development of true Church music would have been quite out of place on the stage.

Monteverde's bitterest enemies could scarcely fail to see that he had found his true vocation at last. Well would it have been for polyphonic art, and for his own reputation also, had he recognized it sooner. Had he given his attention to dramatic music, from the first, the mass and the madrigal might perhaps have still been preserved in the purity bequeathed to them by Palestrina and Luca Marenzio. As it was, the utter demolition of the older school was effected before the newer one was built upon its ruins: and Monteverde was as surely the destroyer of the first as he was the founder of the second.

"Arianna" was succeeded, in 1608, by "Orfeo," a work of still grander proportions, in which the composer employs an orchestra consisting of no less than thirty-six instruments—an almost incredible number for that early age. As no perfect copy of "Arianna" has been preserved to us, we know little or nothing of the instrumental effects by which its beauties were enhanced. But, happily, "Orfeo" was published in a complete form in 1609, and was reissued in 1615; and from directions given in the printed copy we learn that

the several instruments employed in the orchestra were so combined as to produce the greatest possible variety of effect, and to aid the dramatic power of the work by the introduction of those contrasts which are generally regarded as the exclusive product of modern genius.

"Orfeo," indeed, exhibits many very remarkable affinities with dramatic music in its latest form of development—affinities which may not unreasonably lead us to inquire whether some of our newest conceptions are really so original as we suppose them to be. The employment of certain characteristic instruments to support the voices of certain members of the dramatis personæ is one of them. The constant use of a species of mezzo recitativo—so to speak—in preference either to true recitative or true melody, is another. But what shall we say of the instrumental prelude, formed, from beginning to end, upon one single chord, with one single bass note sustained throughout? No two compositions could be less alike, in feeling, than this and the introduction to "Das Rheingold"—yet, in construction, the two pieces are absolutely identical.

Monteverde produced only one more work of any importance, during his residence at Mantua—a mythological spectacle, called "Il Ballo delle Ingrate," which was performed at the same time as "Orfeo." Five years later he was invited to Venice by the procuratori of Saint Mark's, who, on the death of Giulio Cesare Martinengo, in 1613, elected him their maestro di capella, promising him a salary of three hundred ducats per annum—half as much again as any previous maestro had ever received—together with a sum of fifty ducats for the expenses of his journey, and a

house in the canons' close. In 1616 his salary was raised to five hundred ducats, and from that time forward he gave himself up entirely to the service of the Republic, and signed his name "Claudio Monteverde, Veneziano."

The new maestro's time was now fully occupied in the composition of Church music for the cathedral, in training the singers who were to perform it, and in directing the splendid choir placed under his command. His efforts to please his generous patrons were crowned with complete success; and his fame spread far and wide. On May 25, 1621, some Florentines resident in Venice celebrated a grand Requiem, in the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, in memory of Duke Cosmo II. Monteverde composed the music, which produced a profound impression; but, judging from Strozzi's extravagant description, it would seem to have been more fitted for performance in the theater than in the church.

A happier opportunity for the exercise of his own peculiar talent presented itself in 1624, in connection with some festivities which took place at the Palace of Girolamo Mocenigo. On this occasion he composed the music to a grand dramatic interlude, called "Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda," in the course of which he introduced, among other novel effects, an instrumental tremolo, used exactly as we use it at the present day—a passage which so astonished the performers that at first they refused to play it.

But Monteverde's will was now too powerful to be resisted. He was the most popular composer in Europe. In 1627 he composed five intermezzi for the court of Parma. In 1629 he wrote a cantata—"Il

Rosajo fiorito"—for the birthday festival of the son of Vito Morosini, governor of Rovigo. In 1630 he won new laurels by the production of "Proserpina rapita," a grand opera, to a libretto written for him by Giulio Strozzi, and represented at the marriage festival of Lorenzo Giustiniani and Giustiniana Mocenigo.

Soon after this event Italy was devastated by a pestilence, which within the space of sixteen months destroyed fifty thousand lives. On the cessation of the plague, in November, 1631, a grand thanksgiving service was held in the Cathedral of Saint Mark, and for this Monteverde wrote a mass, in the Gloria and Credo of which he introduced an accompaniment of trombones. Two years later he was admitted to the priesthood, and after this we hear nothing more of him for some considerable time.

In the year 1637 the first Venetian opera-house, Il Teatro di San Cassiano, was opened to the public, by Benedetto Ferrari and Francesco Manelli. In 1639 the success of the house was assured; and Monteverde wrote for it a new opera, called "L'Adone." In 1641 "Arianna" was revived, with triumphant success, at another new theater—that of Saint Mark. In the same year the veteran composer produced two new works—"Le Nozze di Enea con Lavinia" and "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria." Finally, in 1642, appeared "L'Incoronazione di Poppea"—the last great effort of a genius which, in less than half a century, proved itself strong enough to overthrow a system that had been at work for ages, and to establish in its place another, which has served as the basis of all the great works produced between the year in which the domi-

nant seventh was invented and that in which we are now living.

Monteverde died in 1643, and was buried in the Chiesa dei Frari, where his remains still rest, in a chapel on the gospel side of the choir. Of his printed works, we possess eight books of madrigals, published between the years 1587 and 1638; the volume of canzonette, published in 1584; a volume of scherzi; the complete edition of "Orfeo"; and three volumes of Church music. A manuscript copy of "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse" is preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna; but it is much to be regretted that the greater number of the composer's manuscripts appear to be hopelessly lost—a kind of misfortune too frequent in musical history.

We shall never be able to say the same of his influence upon art—that can never perish. To him we owe the discovery of a new path, in which no later genius has ever disdained to walk; and, as long as that path leads to new beauties, he will maintain a continual claim upon our gratitude, notwithstanding the innumerable beauties of another kind which he trod under foot in laying it open to us.

While various attempts had already been made in Italy at finding a new method of musical expression, and not without considerable results, Monteverde was the first trained musician who devoted himself to the work. He was equipped for conquest in a manner to which his predecessors in the new field could lay no claim, and when his chance came he was able at once to put a fresh complexion upon the prospects of opera. It is only necessary to glance at the score of "Orfeo," the principal work of his which is available for study in an

edition accessible to English students, to realize how great was the step that he made from the first tentative efforts of the Florentine amateurs. Their few tinkling lutes have given place to an orchestra of viols, contrabassi, organ, harpischord, chitarroni, flutes, cornetti, and trumpets—in fact, strings, wood and brass complete—used with a surprising instinct for instrumental effect; their shapeless dialogue is transformed into often highly expressive recitative rising at times almost to the dignity of an aria; their childish harmonies are superseded by novel and daring experiments in discord, which, though they may sound ordinary enough to ears trained upon Richard Strauss, must have made the hair of conservative musicians in those days stand upon end.

When we consider what Monteverde actually accomplished, how, working with practically no models, he produced a new art-form, founded upon a convention till then unknown to the world, how he equipped it with a new theory of harmony, a new method of vocal writing, and a new system of orchestration, we cannot but admit that this was one of the greatest creative intellects that the world of art has ever known. But something must be said for the people of his own day, for the audiences which made his success possible. Fortunately for him, he was born into an age of life and movement, an age when men's minds turned lightly to things new and beautiful. The Renaissance and the Reformation had struck blows effective. Old links were shattered, old formulas cast aside. The air throbbed with the passion of revolt. A new springtime had burst upon the world. Just at the right moment a fortunate appointment drew Mon-

teverde to Venice, of all the cities in Italy the most favorable for his work. The Venetians, among whom his lot was cast for the last thirty years of his life, were the Athenians of their time. In music and painting they had been the leaders of Italy for the best part of a century. Their quick wit, their restless ingenuity, their love of variety were proverbial. They welcomed the new art with open arms. Monteverde's definite secularization of music had no terrors for them. They had loved color in painting and architecture; they loved it no less in music. Monteverde's strange new harmonies, so passionate in their beauty compared to the placid flow of sexless spirituality in mass and motet, his wonderful orchestration with its ever-changing combinations of instruments, opened fresh worlds of enchantment to their delighted ears. Venice speedily became the home of opera. At first Monteverde's works were given only at festivals celebrated by princely houses, but the people had not long to wait. Before the century closed, the city possessed no fewer than eleven theaters devoted to the performance of opera alone. The continuance of Monteverde's influence was assured, for his success soon found him followers.

PURCELL

(1658?-1695)



HENRY PURCELL

THIS great English musician and composer was the second son of Henry Purcell the elder, who also was a musician of some repute and a gentleman of the Chapel Royal. The younger Henry Purcell is traditionally said to have been born in Old Pye Street, Westminster, in or about 1658. He lost his father before he was six years old, and soon afterward was admitted a chorister of the Chapel Royal under Captain Henry Cooke, after whose death, in 1672, he continued under Pelham Humfrey. He is said to have composed anthems while yet a chorister. He may have remained in the choir for a brief period after the appointment of Dr. John Blow as successor to Humfrey as Master of the Children, but the probability is that, after quitting the choir on the breaking of his voice, he studied composition under Blow as a private pupil, and so justified the statement on Blow's monument that he was "master to the famous Mr. H. Purcell."

The precocity of Purcell's youthful compositions would perhaps not have been so remarkable but for their undoubtedly spontaneous character, and it is by reason of this quality in his music that he stands so far above his contemporaries. As applied to Purcell, the title of "Father of English Music" is merited.

It is greatly to be regretted that the records of his life are so meager. In his own day he was by no

means widely known in England, and only a small proportion of his work was published during his lifetime. Throughout his early years Dr. Blow continued a good friend to him. His influence secured Purcell's appointment as "copyist" at the Abbey, and four years afterward, on Blow's resignation of the post, the young musician, when barely twenty-four, succeeded his former instructor as organist. During these years anthems, songs, and sonatas flowed in numbers from his facile pen; and his writing, apart from its freshness and independence, gave signs of a rare musical tact, evident in his vocal music from the aptness with which the melody fits the words. Any one acquainted with Purcell's songs will understand how the sense of this vigorous and accurate setting of the words led Burney to say that "to his mind Purcell's vocal music was sometimes as superior to Handel's as an original poem to a translation." In 1680, shortly after his appointment as organist to the Abbey (or later, as recent research appears to have shown), Purcell wrote his opera "Dido and Æneas." Its first performance was private. The original title runs: "Dido and Æneas. An Opera performed at Mr. Josiah Priest's Boarding-School at Chelsea, by young Gentlewomen." Had he written nothing else, this work would have given him peculiar prominence as an English composer. Here was attempted for the first time an English opera in which the words were sung throughout. In the same year took place another event of importance to Purcell —his marriage; but of his wife we know nothing.

The success of "Dido and Æneas" led him to turn his attention for some time mainly to dramatic music, for which his genius was so obviously fitted. The best

known of his compositions during the next fifteen years are his music to 'The Tempest" (1690), "Dioclesian" (1690—the only opera printed in his lifetime), and Dryden's "King Arthur" (1691). Dryden's admiration for Purcell was very great, and on one occasion found expression in the couplet:

> Sometimes a hero in an age appears,
> But scarce a Purcell in a thousand years.

Of the beauty of Purcell's "Tempest" music it is not necessary to speak. "Come unto these yellow sands" and "Full fathoms five" are songs as easily and as readily admired now as two hundred years ago.

The composer Matthew Locke, though considerably Purcell's senior, was one of his most intimate friends. There is a record, in Doran's "Annals of the Stage," of the two friends having acted together in public. On one occasion, Doran tells us, Davenant's "Siege of Rhodes" was performed by a company of amateurs which included Matthew Locke and Harry Purcell.

As if to show that his dramatic labors had in no way impaired his powers in the domain of sacred music, Purcell produced, in the last year of his life, a composition of a singularly solemn and impressive character. This was the music for the funeral service of Queen Mary. Perhaps the most eloquent tribute to its excellence is the fact that the anthem "Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts," has been used at every choral funeral service that has taken place at Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's since its first production. Dr. Croft, whose Burial Office has in great measure superseded Purcell's, refrained from composing to these words, on the ground that "Pur-

cell's music was unapproachable," and incorporated the anthem in question into his own work.

Purcell's constitution was delicate by inheritance, and had become still further weakened by the strain of late hours necessitated by his professional duties. After a short illness, he died on November 21, 1695. In Westminster Abbey is a tablet to his memory; the inscription, whose authorship has been ascribed, perhaps wrongly, to Dryden, runs: "Here lyes Henry Purcell, Esq., who left this life, and is gone to that blessed place where only his harmony can be exceeded."

We know, as has already been said, scarcely anything of his personality; but he seems to have been of a bright and joyous nature, overflowing with spirits as his music overflows with melody, yet—as is also evident from his music—capable of deep emotion. It was, no doubt, his geniality and an appreciation of merry friendship that gave rise to the stories told of his love of tavern company. Had he in reality been the tap-room roysterer that some of these tales would make him, he would scarcely have found the favor he did with men of position and refinement. All his recorded utterances respecting his own work are marked by a scrupulous modesty. He was well aware of the importance of the services he wished to render to English music, but his conviction of the possible development of his work by his successors led him to undervalue his own performance.

His name was not entirely unknown, even in his lifetime, among foreign musicians. Cummings relates his having seen, in a contemporary French manuscript, mention of "M. Pourselle"; while Corelli declared that "Purcell would be the only thing worth seeing in Eng-

land, if ever he should be able to make the journey thither."

Purcell's estimate of the position of English music in his time may be seen from the following extract from the dedication of one of his works. "Poetry and painting," he says, "have arriv'd to perfection in this country; Musick is but yet in its nonage—a forward child, which gives hopes of what it may be hereafter in England when the masters of it shall find more encouragement. 'Tis now learning Italian, which is its best master, and studying a little of the French air, to give it somewhat more of gaiety and fashion. Thus being further from the sun we are of later growth than our neighbour countries, and must be content to shake off our barbarity by degrees."

Though during his lifetime the general public by no means realized the importance of Purcell's work, his position among his fellow-musicians was soon determined. Dr. Tudway, a fellow-chorister and life-long friend of his, says of him: "He had a most commendable ambition of exceeding every one of his time, and he succeeded in it without contradiction; there being none in England, nor anywhere else that I know of, that could come in competition with him for compositions of all kinds."

Purcell modestly regarded himself as one qualified merely to give a passing impulse to his art; we can now appreciate how fruitful might have been his endeavors, had not external influences proved fatal to their development at the hands of those who came after him.

"So far as sheer invention goes," says a critical writer, "Purcell must rank with the greatest com-

posers of all time. Where he falls below the highest standard is in his inability to give his ideas proper treatment, in his lack of the sense of proportion, in his deficiency in the architectonic side of music—to sum him up in a word, in his provinciality. If we take all the circumstances in which he worked into consideration the wonder is, not that he accomplished so little, but that he accomplished so much." In his time there were no recognized musical standards to work by. Every man thought for himself, wrote for himself, and judged for himself. There was no one to show him his faults. He was, and must have known perfectly well that he was, a far greater man than any of his contemporaries. Naturally he was exceedingly well satisfied with himself, and probably soon got to think that he was beyond criticism, and that his world ought to be very grateful for anything he chose to give it. Now if he had been well snubbed as a boy, if he had had to work hard under some prosy pedant with his head full of traditions, if he had begun his career with a few thoroughgoing failures, how much better it would have been for him! Nothing would have checked his astonishing power of invention; but the sense of having to live up to the standard of a great past, the knowledge of there being a tribunal of cultivated men to appeal to would have fired him to put nothing but his very best into what he wrote. What he needed above all was an artistic environment, an atmosphere of high thought and intellectual striving—instead of the debauched sensualism of the Restoration.

Purcell's work falls naturally into three main divisions: his Church music, his theater music, and his instrumental works. In all three he is far ahead of

all the other men of his time, so far as intrinsic excellence is concerned, but he has not the consistent elevation of style of Lulli, nor the clear-cut elegance and suave grace of the best Italians. In his anthems he derives directly from Pelham Humfrey, who learned a great deal from Lulli; but Purcell developed the new style of Church music, and blended with it some of the grandeur and dignity of the old polyphonic masters.

For the most part his Church music is of what may be called the Restoration type, in which passages for solo voices, duets, and trios abound, and the share of the chorus is reduced to a minimum. His anthems are strangely unequal. Many of them are written in the jigging jog-trot style which Charles II liked, because he could beat time to it; others are defaced by the taste of the time for quaint musical conceits, as in the famous "They that go down to the sea in ships," which opens with a scale passage for a bass voice descending to the double D, or the curious "They hold all together and keep themselves close," in which the voices gradually draw closer and closer together till they end upon one and the same note. In others again the search for new methods of expression is carried to childish extremes, and in nearly all the form is loose and slovenly to an unpardonable extent. But there is hardly one that has not some illuminating flash of genius, some point of intense musical beauty that only a master could have devised and so skillfully executed.

In a different vein, but one strikingly characteristic of another side of Purcell's genius, is his exquisite spring-song, "My beloved spake," an anthem brimming

over with bright melody and exquisite sympathy with nature. Never have the freshness and the sweet unrest of Spring been set to music of a more liquid melodiousness than the passage in which Purcell sings of the fig-tree putting forth her leaves, and of the vines with their tender grapes that give a good smell.

In a manner allied to that of his anthems, but, as a rule, of greater elaboration, are the many odes which Purcell composed for state and private celebrations. Odes were the fashion of the day, and whether St. Cecilia's day was to be celebrated according to the jovial custom of the time, or London Yorkshiremen met for their annual feast, or the King returned to his capital from Newmarket, or the Queen fancied that she was going to have a baby, the occasion required musical celebration. The words of these odes are usually the most dismal pieces of hack-work imaginable, but Purcell generally found something in them to fire his genius. The choral parts of these works are often singularly rich and imposing, and are usually more fully developed than similar passages in the anthems.

One of the best of Purcell's odes, that written in 1692 for St. Cecilia's Day, has been performed in recent years. It is particularly interesting to any one who wants to understand how Purcell stands in the history of musical development. It shows at once his strength and his weakness in the most unmistakable manner, his brilliant inventive powers, his splendid ideas, and his inability to put them to a proper use. All through the work the composer is hovering between various styles, and everywhere is lack of unity. It is this curious inequality in Purcell's music that

makes it at once so fascinating and so disappointing. At one moment he lifts you to the stars, and the next he dashes you down to earth.

It is perhaps in his music for the theater that Purcell is most consistently excellent. During the latter part of his career he appears to have been the regular conductor at the theater in Dorset Garden, and to have supplied all the pieces presented there with such incidental music as they required. So far as is known he wrote music for more than fifty plays; in some cases only a song or two. Only once did he write a real opera, a drama without spoken dialogue, sung from beginning to end, and that was the "Dido and Æneas" already mentioned. It is, both in its strength and weakness, a good specimen of Purcell's dramatic music. A great deal of it is childishly helpless, and the music, so far as it expresses anything, only expresses the composer's entire inability to express anything at all. But here and there are wonderful passages, which give as complete a proof of Purcell's natural genius as anything he ever wrote. The close of the opera with Dido's famous death-song and the tender little chorus of Cupid's is inexpressibly touching, and there is a curious note of weird horror in the strains of the witch-music.

The reception of Purcell's one opera did not encourage him to repeat the experiment. The taste of the day did not demand purely musical pieces. The convention upon which opera is founded, the substitution of song for speech, has never appealed to Englishmen as a nation, and from Purcell's day to our own opera has always been an exotic in their country. The incidental music which Purcell produced with such amaz-

ing fertility during his later years is rather a development of the earlier masque music of Lawes and his fellows than of opera as it flourished in France or Italy. Purcell's melody is thoroughly English in type and contour; it owes nothing to any foreign influence. In the details of musical structure he no doubt owed a good deal to France if not to Italy. From Pelham Humfrey Purcell undoubtedly learned a good deal about French music, and in all probability the scores of Lulli's operas, which were published as soon as they were produced, found their way to England. But though one can point to occasional passages which betray external influence, as a whole Purcell's theater music is remarkably original. In all the essential qualities of great music it is singularly strong. It has inexhaustible melody, varied and appropriate, solidity of structure, and even, considering the limited resources available, some attempt at orchestral color.

Apart from a few songs, which have woven themselves inextricably into England's national heritage of music, Purcell is probably better known to the present generation by his instrumental music than by anything else. And it is here that we find him, if not at his greatest, nevertheless more uniform, more sustained, and perhaps more corresponding to the general ideal of what a great composer should be. The form of his instrumental music is restricted, but within its narrow limits he attained a singularly even level of excellence. If we do not here find the tremendous grandeur or the poignant passion of certain inspired moments of "Dido and Æneas" and "Dioclesian," we get a far more intimate view of Purcell's own self, of the exquisite charm of his personality, and of the lovely

serenity of character which endeared him to his contemporaries.

Purcell's string sonatas are admittedly founded on Italian models, but they have a personal touch which is essentially English. Here, almost more than in anything else that he wrote, we can realize how far Purcell was in front of his age. At times he rises to the majestic breadth of Handel, and in his harpsichord pieces he often suggests the concentrated emotion of Bach. In his instrumental works Purcell is often slight, but rarely trivial; often playful, but never commonplace. To those who look upon music as the supremest means of personal expression given by God to man, rather than as a pleasing concatenation of sounds agreeably adapted for passing an idle half-hour, Purcell's music is especially interesting, since in it are found the germs of all that composers since his day have developed in such amazing fashion. He never, of course, was a writer of programme music in the modern sense of the word, but that he used music as a means of expressing his own joys and sorrows, his own hopes and fears, it is impossible for any one who listens with a sympathetic ear to deny. Herein lies the secret of Purcell's charm, of that fascination which, in spite of countless weaknesses, insufficiencies, and failings, his music still continues to exercise.

Judged from a certain standpoint, Purcell was a failure; indeed the most tragic part of his story is that when he died there was no one to continue his work. Had he lived longer, and had he succeeded in founding a school to carry on the traditions that he had inaugurated with such splendid success, the whole history of English music might have been altered. As it was

he left no successor, and when Handel appeared in England, fifteen years after Purcell's death, he took undisputed possession of the field and turned the course of music in England into an entirely different channel.

From the historical point of view Purcell's achievement remains a monument of sterile endeavor, yet his career is one which his countrymen can still regard with pride, and his personality still speaks to all who have ears to hear and souls to appreciate the meanings that music conveys.

BACH

(1685-1750)



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

FOR nearly two centuries the genealogy of the Bach family presents an almost unbroken series of German musicians; but it is in Johann Sebastian Bach, whose magnificent gifts made its name immortal, that the genius of the race is concentrated as in a focus, to be diminished and dispersed through the line of his descendants. His great-great-grandfather, Veit Bach, miller and baker of Wechmar in Thuringia, was a man of musical tastes, of whom the legend survives that he enlivened the monotony of watching the grinding of his corn by playing to himself upon the cithara. His son Hans was a violinist, whose musical instruction was undertaken by another Bach who was then town piper at Gotha; and so on, through the widely spreading family, the talent for music spread and was fostered, till in the quiet Thuringian valleys the Bachs formed almost a musical guild among themselves.

This closeness of the family tie among the various branches not only afforded opportunity for mutual encouragement in their art, but was of even more value as a moral safeguard at such times as lawlessness and corruption raged unchecked. To these predisposing influences, no doubt, was due the patriarchal simplicity of character which distinguished the greatest of their line, his uprightness and devotion to his art.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born at Eisenach,

Saxe-Weimar, Germany, March 21, 1685. His father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, was one of twin brothers; a violinist; twice married, and blessed with a large family—two conditions in which his son was destined to follow his example. Both he and his wife died when Sebastian was ten years old; and the boy, who had already acquired from his father the rudiments of the violin, was taken into the house of Johann Christoph, the eldest son of the family, who was then organist at Ohrdruf. Here the young Bach lived for five years, learning the clavier under his brother's tuition, and showing so marked an ability for music as to bring upon himself his instructor's jealous severity, to the point of injustice and hardship. A manuscript collection of contemporary music, belonging to his brother, was especially coveted by him, but was relentlessly kept from his sight. His pertinacity was, however, not to be daunted; he succeeded at night in dragging the precious manuscript out through the latticed door of the cupboard in which it was locked, and surreptitiously made a copy of its contents by moonlight, a task which took him six months. Discovery followed, and his copy, the result of so much labor, was ruthlessly taken from him; nor did he see it again until after his brother's death.

It must have been a welcome escape from this jealous supervision when, at the age of fifteen, his fine treble voice gained him admission to the choir of the Convent of St. Michael at Lüneburg. As a consequence he received free schooling, as well as a training in vocal music; he perfected his studies in the clavier and violin, and, what was dearest to him of all, became a proficient performer upon the organ.

During the three years that ensued his attention was mainly centered upon organ music, practical and theoretical, his idol being Reinken, who was then organist at Hamburg.

After his voice broke he held for a few months (in 1703) the post of court violinist at Weimar, in the service of the brother of the reigning duke; but a visit paid by chance to the town of Arnstadt, in the autumn of the same year, resulted, to his great joy, in his appointment as organist to the "new church" there. Here the reputation he acquired gained for him, although but a boy of eighteen, indulgences which are a proof of the estimation in which his skill was held. Various irregularities—such as laxity in his training of the church choir, and a too close devotion of unduly extended leisure to his theoretical studies—reached their climax in the unauthorized protraction (into an absence of three months) of a one month's leave granted to him to study the organ under the famous master Buxtehude at Lübeck.

On his return to Arnstadt his reprimand from the Consistory, besides laying stress upon his neglect of his duties, maintained that "the organist Bach" had, in his conduct of the church services, "made sundry perplexing variations and imported divers strange harmonies, in such wise that the congregation was thereby confounded." The upshot of the matter was that in the autumn of 1707 he accepted an invitation to fill the vacant post of organist at Mühlhausen on his own terms. These he made modestly low, stipulating merely for the same sum that he had received at Arnstadt. He remained a year at Mühlhausen, during which time he was married to Maria Barbara, daugh-

ter of another Bach who was at that time organist at Gehren.

His first position of real distinction was reached in 1708, when, at the age of twenty-three, he was elected organist to the Ducal Chapel at Weimar, a town already famous as a musical center. Six years later he was appointed Hof-concertmeister to the Duke. At the time of his going to Weimar Bach's musical studies were complete, and he was already famous as one of the first organists of his day. Now began his activity as a composer, the finest of his organ works being written during the nine years at Weimar. His compositions fall, roughly speaking, into three divisions, corresponding with the three chief episodes in his life: the organ works belonging to the Weimar period, the instrumental works to the six years subsequently spent at Köthen, and the choral works to the last twenty-seven years of his life, passed at Leipzig. He seems to have had but little direct instruction in composition, and to have arrived at the fullness of his powers by means of diligent study of the best existing models. Upon the result of this his original genius worked in such a manner as to win for him from posterity the title of the "Father of music," and to justify Schumann's saying that "to Bach music owes almost as great a debt as a religion owes to its founder."

Of the details of Bach's life at Weimar little is known. Its sober routine, eminently acceptable to one so essentially bound up in his home life, was broken by yearly visits to other towns—Halle, Cassel, Leipzig, and Dresden. In his double official capacity as organist and master of court music he was required, besides directing secular performances, to provide a cer

tain number of Church compositions; to this we owe the magnificent series of organ works, as well as a few of his finest Church cantatas.

The last of his annual expeditions from Weimar was made to Dresden, where he was challenged to a trial of skill by a famous French harpsichord-player, Marchand. The challenge was accepted, and Bach duly presented himself for a contest which was awaited with eager anticipation by the musical world at Dresden. At the last moment, however, no Marchand appeared; and inquiry ascertained that he had hurriedly left Dresden that morning, tacitly according the victory to Bach. To the credit of Bach it is recorded that the incident in no way affected his generous appreciation of the graceful compositions of the French master.

What caused Bach to leave Weimar is not very clear, save that real or imaginary grievances as to his treatment at the Duke's hands seem to have irritated his naturally quick temper. In any case, he accepted in 1717 the post of master of music to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen, who had been a frequent visitor at the court of Weimar. At Köthen Bach remained for six years. Being no longer organist, but director of the Prince's court music, his attention during this period was mainly directed to instrumental compositions; and to the period between 1717 and 1723 belong his concerti, sonatas, and suites for the clavier, as well as the first part of "Das wohltemperirte Clavier," the most masterly collection of preludes and fugues in existence.

In 1719 Bach was at Halle, whither he had traveled in the hope of making the acquaintance of Handel,

who was there on a visit to his family. He unfortunately arrived just after Handel had left; a second attempt, ten years later, to meet his famous contemporary was equally unsuccessful.

It was while Bach was with his princely patron at Carlsbad that news reached him of the death of his wife, whom he had left in perfect health. He returned to Köthen to find her already buried. Only four of her seven children had survived their infancy, and to these their father's care was now mainly directed. Of the musical ability of his eldest son, Wilhelm Friedmann, Bach had great hopes, and his "Clavier-Büchlein," "Inventions" for clavier, and the first part of "Das wohltemperirte Clavier" were designed as a progressive course of instruction for the youth.

Two years after his first wife's death, Bach married Anna Magdalena Wülkens, daughter of a court musician at Weissenfels. He was again entirely happy in his marriage. His wife, who bore him thirteen children, was a fine singer and a musician of cultivated tastes. In many details of his work, such as the copying out of his scores, she was of immense assistance to him.

While at Köthen, Bach had applied for the post of organist to the Jacobi Kirche at Hamburg, but was unsuccessful; the appointment was given to an entirely unknown musician who, as afterward transpired, had gained it through flagrant bribery. Pleasant as was his intercourse with his patron, Bach seems to have felt the need of a wider public and a wider sphere of work than was attainable at the Köthen court. Moreover, the Prince had followed his kapellmeister's



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example and taken to himself a wife. She had no taste for music, a fact which inevitably tended to breed indifference to Bach's efforts in that direction; and a year later Bach returned to the welcome atmosphere of Church music as successor to the famous Kuhnau, cantor to the Thomasschule at Leipzig.

This position, which he occupied for the rest of his life, Bach took up in May, 1723. His duties at Leipzig were not those of organist; but he had sole direction of the musical instruction, theoretical and practical, in the school, and also of the music at the four chief churches in the town. Despite the importance of his post, he seems to have enjoyed ample leisure for composition; and to these last twenty-seven years of his life the world is indebted for the greatest of his works, including the Passions, the mass in B minor, the Christmas Oratorio, the Magnificat, and upward of two hundred Church cantatas.

In common with nearly all great minds, Bach was in many respects in advance of his age. We are now able to appreciate the extent to which he anticipated (in elementary fashion, it is true) many of the developments which his art was afterward to undergo. To take a single instance: a suite, written at the time of the departure of a favorite brother from home, is one of the earliest examples of what is now known as "programme music." The united laments of the family are heard in protestation at the traveler's farewell, but their efforts are useless, and the music changes to a bustling finale of departure through which is heard the call of the postilion's horn. In the Passions—even in the great Mass—occur what one is tempted to call operatic effects; and it may have been

this tendency to descriptiveness (engendered, no doubt, by Bach's close study of contemporary opera) that led to his being obliged, before entering upon his duties as cantor at Leipzig, to subscribe to a variety of conditions, one of which required him not to make the music in church too long, nor "too operatic," but rather "such as to encourage the hearers to devotion."

Bach's years at Leipzig, full as they were of musical activity, were also full of feuds and friction with the authorities, who seem to have been incapable of understanding the greatness of the man with whom they were dealing; while he adopted toward them an independent attitude little calculated to smooth away points of difference. At the time of his going to the Thomasschule, affairs in that institution were falling from bad to worse. Bach threw himself heart and soul into the task of reorganization, but neither his work in that quarter nor his attempts to widen his musical influence in Leipzig met with their due recognition.

Whatever were Bach's relations with the outside world, his own home continually furnished him with consolation and content. With the aid of the musical talents of his wife and children he had made of his house a renowned musical center, and there amidst his family and his friends he found an encouragement ever ready to counteract any external disappointment. Nor was he without formal honors. He was presented with honorary court appointments by the Elector of Saxony and the Duke of Weissenfels, and three years before his death received and accepted a flattering invitation to visit the court of Frederick the Great at Berlin, where his son Emanuel held a musical post. The King, who held no mean opinion of his own musi-

cal powers, received Bach with marked respect and kindness, as a return for which Bach subsequently worked out in considerable elaboration a theme given him by the King, and dedicated it to him as a "Musicalisches Opfer."

From the little we know of his personality, Bach's character seems to have been, like his genius, the concentration of those of his ancestors—deeply religious, of marked probity, simplicity and singleness of purpose, contented with his lot, genial and encouraging to his pupils, and happy in his large family and the quiet blessings of his home circle. The combined firmness and sweetness of his nature is closely reflected in his music, where the severest regard for beauty of form is tempered by an unerring instinct for emotional effect.

During the later years of his life Bach withdrew a great deal from society. His eyesight, always weak, was becoming defective; indeed, so much did this incapacitate him for the discharge of his duties that in the year before his death the municipal council seriously considered the advisability of appointing a successor to him at the Thomasschule. His eyes were operated upon, but unsuccessfully, by an English oculist of the name of Taylor, who, by a curious coincidence, some years later operated (also unsuccessfully) upon Handel.

Bach died quietly in his sleep July 28, 1750. We hear nothing of his funeral, of musicians and friends flocking to the grave to do honor to the great master who was gone from them; all we are told is that he was buried in St. John's churchyard at Leipzig, but no cross or monument marks his resting-place. His

end was like that of Mozart, who lies in an unknown grave in the churchyard of St. Marx at Vienna. Men cared very little then for the memory of one whose fame has in after days gone out into all the earth. The only record that we have is in the register of deaths preserved in the Leipzig Town Library, which runs as follows: "*A man,* age 67, Johann Sebastian Bach, musical director and singing master of the Thomasschule, was carried to his grave in the hearse, July 30, 1750."

His death attracted but little notice, his family being unable to afford the expense of the customary funeral oration at the grave. The master of the Thomasschule made no reference to the event in his annual speech, nor was mention of it made in any Leipzig newspaper. The Musical Society of the town, however, did not let it pass quite unnoticed, and one of its members communicated to the Berlin press a paragraph to the effect "that the loss of this extraordinarily gifted man will be regretted by all true musicians."

Ninety-three years after his death, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, to whom we are so much indebted for the study of Bach at the present day, erected a monument to the memory of the grand old cantor of Leipzig, opposite the house in which he had lived, and under the windows of the study where he had worked so long.

Bach's widow died ten years later in complete poverty. Several of his children managed to make their way in the world unaided; but his youngest daughter was eventually compelled to accept the assistance of a fund to which Beethoven was proud to subscribe, but toward which the Leipzig authorities con-

tributed nothing. Though the name of Bach was still held in reverence by a few admirers, his works gradually dropped out of performance, and it was not until nearly a century had passed that the world of music once more awoke—thanks chiefly to the efforts of Mozart, Mendelssohn and Schumann abroad, and Wesley in England—to a recognition of the supremacy of his genius.

Bach's range of thought was relatively narrow, but by its very restriction it gained in intensity and concentration. His mind was typical of his time and place. He had imbibed to the full the Lutheran view of the relations between God and man. The thing seen to him had no glory, save as it shadowed the truths of his creed. A primrose by a river's brim he valued not as a thing of beauty, but as a symbol of his Creator's beneficence. This view of things permeates his music. He was more a moralist than an artist. His music was not to him an end in itself, so much as an engine for the saving of men's souls. He sings his Maker's praise, not for the joy of singing, but as an act of thankfulness due from man to God. He tells the story of the Passion not as the most tragic and moving episode in the world's history, but as the means of grace to lost sinners.

The moral view of life colors Bach's music as it has colored that of no other great composer, and it is the complete and entire sincerity of that view which gives to his music its piercing poignancy of appeal. The story of Haydn praying before beginning to compose may or may not be true of Haydn, but it would be much truer of Bach. Never did composer take himself and his mission in deeper earnest. The tenets

of Christianity were hard facts to him, not subjects for elegant musical embroidery. Life was a bitter struggle against definite powers of evil, heaven a place of splendor to be attained only by ceaseless warfare. Beauty for its own sake seemed to him an unworthy object for a Christian to pursue.

Springing from this view of life, or at any rate closely allied to it, is the curiously vivid realism of Bach's music. Never has composer visualized his subject with such intensity. There are no half-lights, no subtle effects of chiaroscuro in Bach; he saw his subject with extraordinary definiteness and gave it musical realization. We talk lightly of the incomplete means of expression at the command of old composers. Incomplete they would probably be in the hands of modern musicians, but they were amply sufficient for the men of their day. A man like Bach, gifted as he was with unequaled clearness of mental vision, coupled with complete command of his material, could often do more with a few strings and hautboys than our modern composers can accomplish with all the paraphernalia of a Wagnerian orchestra. There has probably never been a musician more adept than Bach at picturing a scene in music. It would be easy to quote a hundred instances of his masterly command of the picturesque, but a few will suffice.

Let us take the opening of the cantata "Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen," the words of which are read by the faithful as prophetic of the journey of the Magi to Bethlehem. With a touch Bach gives us the whole scene, the long procession passing over the desert, the solemn march of the caravan, the tinkling of the camels' bells. Or let us turn to the instrumental

movement in another cantata, "Wachet auf," which describes the wise virgins going forth to meet the bridegroom. See how the train of girls dances out into the night, swaying hither and thither to the sound of strange Eastern music, while their lamps twinkle in the darkness! How is it done—with a few violins and an organ? Ah, that is Bach's secret!

This gift of Bach's, of extracting the utmost conceivable amount of picturesque expression from the words he had to set, was one which sometimes led him perilously near the verge of disaster. He inherited from his German predecessors a taste for quaint musical devices, which he sometimes indulged unduly. Occasionally he condescended to something very like a musical pun, as in the song "Ach mit gedämpft und schwachen Stimme," where the fact that the word "Dämpfer" happens to be the German for a mute led him to adorn the song with an obbligato for muted violin, or in the "Crucifixus" of the B Minor Mass, where he pictures Christ hanging on the Cross by a series of suspensions! There is a suggestion of provinciality in this, which a wider knowledge of the world would probably have corrected.

If Bach, like Dante, shrank from no touch, however grotesque, that he thought would heighten the impressiveness of his picture, he could also, like Dante, soar to regions of such imaginative splendor as few composers have ever attained. Curiously enough for a composer so essentially German in feeling and attitude, we find Bach at his greatest in music written to Latin words, such as the B Minor Mass and the Magnificat, where the associations of the text drew him for the moment from his favorite chorales

toward a more Italian form of thought and expression. It is one of the most signal proofs of Bach's musical genius that in setting the words of the Latin Mass he put off to a great extent the narrower Protestantism which colors so strongly his German sacred works. There is nothing in the Mass that could not have been written by a Catholic. There is hardly a trace in it of the love of dwelling on the physical aspect of things.

More striking proof of Bach's genius than this modification of his usual mental attitude could not be desired, but though the Mass unquestionably represents the climax of his achievement, it cannot for this reason be taken as a typical work. It is rather in the Passion according to St. Matthew that we find Bach's normal view of things represented in its fullest and most transcendent development. The Passion Music as treated by Bach is a typically German art-form, but like most other musical developments it can be traced to an Italian source. The recitation of the history of the Passion by three priests, representing respectively the narrator, Christ, and the other personages of the sacred drama, was an ancient custom in the Roman Church. During the palmy days of the polyphonic period the service was further developed by setting the cries of the crowd as short choral movements. The Lutheran Church borrowed the form of the service from Rome, and characteristically added to it reflective and explanatory passages designed to impress upon the congregation the spiritual meaning of the story, and hymns which gave the congregation an important share in the service. The result, however admirable as a religious exercise, was artistically

deplorable, the unity of the action being disturbed no less by the moralizing solos introduced at every turn than by the devotional hymns of the congregation.

Despite Bach's moralizing habit of mind, however, in his settings of the Passion, of which two out of five survive (for it is not easy to accept the feebly sentimental Luke Passion as his), we find his genius displayed with consummate dignity and splendor. Of these two works, the verdict of the ages has chosen the Matthew Passion as incomparably the greater, great as the John Passion unquestionably is. A comparison of the two works is deeply interesting, and has a special value to the student of Bach's character. No one who has studied that character will be surprised to find Bach in keener sympathy with St. Matthew's version of the Passion story than with that of St. John. To a man of Bach's markedly realistic tendencies the dramatic value of St. Matthew's version made a special appeal. The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the sleep of the disciples, the servant's recognition of Peter by his Galilean accent, the death of Judas, the dream of Pilate's wife, the bearing of the cross by Simon of Cyrene, the mocking of Christ on the cross by the scribes and people, the darkness, the rending of the veil of the temple, the earthquake, and the apparition of the dead—all these incidents appear only in St. Matthew's version; and it is these, illustrated as they are by the poignant realism of Bach's music, that give to his Matthew Passion its amazing vitality of expression.

It is worth noting that the rending of the veil of the temple appeared to Bach so important a feature in the history of the Crucifixion that he actually in-

corporated it into his setting of St. John's version, though it does not, of course, appear in St. John's gospel. The John Passion is earlier than the Matthew, and apart from its widely different treatment of the sacred story, the highly colored narration of St. Matthew being replaced by a far profounder conception of the character of Christ, which obviously appealed less potently to Bach's precise and realistic genius, its treatment is in many ways more experimental and less successful than that of the later work. The vocal writing of many of the solos is crabbed and harsh to a degree rarely surpassed in the history of music, and the utterances of the crowd are treated more in the manner of oratorio, that is to say they are epic rather than dramatic in style, and lack the vivid force of the Matthew choruses.

It is therefore in the Matthew Passion that we find the completest and most typical expression of Bach's genius. It is necessary in considering the work to remember that it is essentially a religious service. As a narrative it would be improved by the excision of all but the words of the gospel; the different points of view introduced by the chorales and the reflective solos are fatal to its unity as a work of art, but regarded as a service they take the place of the sermon and the hymns in the modern office. The work is a complete exposition of the Lutheran view of the Passion, and it must be confessed that Bach has expressed it with a completeness and a fervor of conviction that make his work one of the most overwhelming masterpieces in all the history of music.

The qualities displayed in the Matthew Passion are found in a greater or less degree throughout the long

series of cantatas which Bach wrote for performance in church during his sojourn as organist in Leipzig and other towns. Another striking feature of the cantatas, and one which is also found in Bach's organ music, is the splendid use made of the chorales or hymn-tunes which played so important a part in Lutheran worship. We can form but a faint idea of the effect upon a devout congregation which Bach's magical treatment of the well known melodies must have exercised. To hear a tune familiar from childhood enriched and varied by new and wondrous harmonies according to the sentiment of the words, as is done repeatedly in the two settings of the Passion Music and in the cantatas, must have brought home to those who heard it the meaning of what they were singing in a novel and irresistible fashion.

Sometimes a whole cantata, such as "Christ lag in Todesbanden," is in effect a series of variations upon one well-known tune, each variation corresponding in its treatment to the special sentiment of each verse. A cantata such as this resolved itself into a series of devout meditations upon a familiar theme. The beauty and ingenuity of the thing delights us still. Bach's nature inclined to seriousness if not to gloom, and this particular cantata is a strangely somber one for Easter. In another cantata the famous tune "Ein' feste Burg" is treated with amazing wealth of resource and imagination. One of the verses beginning, "If all the earth with fiends were filled," is an astonishingly vivid piece of realism, the orchestra giving a highly colored picture of an orgy of demons, while the splendid old tune is thundered out by trumpets through all the tempestuous confusion—a curious an-

ticipation, by the way, of the general scheme of the "Tannhäuser" overture.

One of the surest tests of a man's mental fiber is his attitude toward death, and here the nobility of Bach's nature is manifested in the most incontrovertible manner. He lived in a sturdy age. The Lutherans of his time had none of that horror of death characteristic of a later epoch. Many of their hymns, a legacy no doubt from times of persecution, speak of death as a friend. In all of them breathes an air of pious resignation and sometimes of that curious rapture, an echo of which occurs in Walt Whitman's wonderful lament for President Lincoln. Bach's treatment of the subject is always dignified and exalted, one of his earliest cantatas, "Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit," being conspicuous in this respect. At times his imagination carries him toward a more definitely picturesque handling, as in the cantata "Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich sterben," the opening chorus of which has been likened to a peaceful country churchyard, blossoming in the spring, through which a funeral procession winds to the accompaniment of the little bell ringing throughout the movement in the upper register of the flutes. More imposing and no less truthfully realized is the ceremonial splendor of death, as pictured in the "Trauer Ode," a work written for the funeral of a patroness.

Bach's imagination was often exercised by visions of the Judgment Day, a subject specially dear to the Lutheran mind. In his two cantatas on the tune "O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort," he uses the contrast between the terror of sinners and the faith of the righteous with tremendous musical effect; and in the

shorter setting, which is a curious dialogue between Fear and Hope, the mysterious voice of the Holy Spirit uttering from heaven the words, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," is employed with a sudden beauty that has hardly a parallel in music. But for concentrated imagination and sheer power of expression nothing in Bach's works surpasses the passage in the B Minor Mass, which describes the sleep of the dead and their awaking at the sound of the trumpet.

Many critics have said that Bach is greatest in his organ music, as he was likewise the supreme organist; and there, it is true, we find him more of an artist and less of a preacher than in any of his choral works. Freed from the trammels of a set subject, his genius here soars aloft with incomparable majesty and splendor. No one has ever understood the organ as Bach did. It is in a sense the foundation of all his music, and in his hands it speaks with the tongues of angels. Abstract music has nothing grander and more dignified to show than some of his "mountainous fugues," as Browning calls them, and the soul of man has never been poured forth in tones of purer or more exalted rapture than in such a work, to quote but one of many, as the great Fantasia in G.

Bach spoke through music as few have spoken. It is a commonplace to say that every man lives in his work, but Bach lives in his as hardly another musician has done. His personality was tremendously powerful, and we feel it in every bar that he wrote. If his range of vision was not wide, what he saw he saw steadily and saw it whole.

HANDEL

(1685-1759)



GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

OF Handel, Haydn once said, "He is the master of us all." He was born at Halle, in Prussian Saxony, February 23, 1685. His father was a surgeon, and sixty-three years old at the time of Handel's birth—a severe old man, who almost before his son was born had determined that he should be a lawyer. The little child was never allowed to go near a musical instrument, and the father even took him away from the public day-school because the musical gamut was taught there.

But his mother, or his nurse, managed to procure for the boy the forbidden delights; a small clavichord, or dumb spinet, with the strings covered with strips of cloth to deaden the sound, was found for the child, and this he used to keep hidden in the garret, creeping away to play it in the night-time when every one else was asleep, or when his father was away from home.

When George Frederick was seven years of age, the old man was compelled to change his views. He set out one day on a visit to the court of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, where another son by a former marriage was a page. George Frederick had been teasing his father to let him go with him to see his elder brother, whom he had not yet met, but this was refused. When old Handel started by the stage-coach

the next morning, the little fellow was on the watch and ran after it, and the father stopped the coach and took him in. So the child was allowed to go on to Saxe-Weissenfels. When there the chapel, with the beautiful organ, was the great attraction, and George Frederick found his way into the organ-loft, and when the regular service was over, contrived to take the organist's place, and began a performance of his own; and, strange to say, though he had not had the slightest training, a melody with chords and the correct harmonies was heard.

The Duke, who had not left the chapel, had the boy brought to him and soon discovered his passion for music. The Duke told the father it would be wrong to oppose the inclination of the child, and old Handel promised to procure him regular musical instruction.

On Handel's return to Halle he became the pupil of Zachau, organist of the cathedral there. Before the pupil was nine years old, his instructor used to set him to write fugues and motets as exercises, and soon he allowed him to play the organ at the cathedral services on Sunday, whenever Zachau himself wished to take a holiday. When Handel was only nine years old, the master confessed that his pupil knew more music than he himself did, and advised that he should be sent to Berlin, and thither he went in 1696.

In Berlin the boy was soon recognized as a prodigy. There he met two Italian composers of established reputation, Bononcini and Attilio Ariosti, both of whom he was to encounter in after life, though under very different circumstances, in London. Bononcini soon conceived a dislike for the little fellow, and attempted to injure him by composing a piece for the

harpsichord full of great difficulties, and then asking him to play it at sight. The boy, however, at once executed it without a mistake, and the schemer was foiled by his own device.

Attilio was of a different disposition; he praised the young musician, and was never weary of sitting by his side at the organ or harpsichord, and hearing him improvise. The Elector of Brandenburg also conceived a great admiration for the boy's talents, and offered to send him to Italy. But the elder Handel pleaded that he was now an old man, and wished his son to remain near him. Consequently the boy was brought back to Halle to work again under Zachau.

Soon after this return his father died (in 1697), leaving hardly anything for his family, and young Handel had now to bestir himself to make a living. He went to Hamburg, where he obtained a place as second violin in the Opera-house. Soon the post of organist at Lübeck became vacant, and Handel was a candidate for it. But a peculiar condition was attached to the acceptance of the office; the new organist must marry the daughter of the old one! and as Handel either did not approve of the lady, or of matrimony generally (and in fact he never was married), he promptly retired from the competition.

At first no one suspected the youth's talents, for he amused himself by pretending to be an ignoramus, until one day the accompanist on the harpsichord (then the most important instrument in an orchestra) was absent, and young Handel took his place, astonishing everybody by his masterly touch. Probably this discovery aroused the jealousy of some of his brother artists, for soon afterward a duel took place between

him and Mattheson, a clever composer and singer, who one night in the midst of a quarrel, on leaving the theater, gave him a box on the ear: swords were drawn, and the duel took place there and then under the portico of the theater. Fortunately Mattheson's weapon was shivered by coming in contact with a metal button on his opponent's coat. Explanations were then offered, and the two adversaries became friends afterward. "Almira, Queen of Castile," Handel's first opera, was brought out in Hamburg in 1705, and was followed by "Nero" and "Daphne," all received with great favor and frequently performed.

But the young musician determined to visit Italy, and after staying in Hamburg three years he was able to set off on the journey. He visited Florence, Venice, Rome, and Naples, in almost every city writing operas, which we are told were produced with brilliant success. At Venice an opera was sought for from him, and in three weeks he had written "Agrippina." When produced it was received with wild enthusiasm, the theater resounding with shouts of "*Viva il caro Sassone!*" (Long live the dear Saxon!)

The following story illustrates the extraordinary fame he so quickly acquired in Italy. He arrived at Venice during the middle of the Carnival, and was taken to a masked ball, and there played the harpsichord, still keeping on his mask. Domenico Scarlatti, the most famous harpsichord-player of his age, on hearing him, exclaimed, "Why, it's the devil, or else the Saxon whom every one is talking about!" In 1709 he returned to Hanover, and was appointed by the Elector George of Brunswick, afterward King George I of England, his court kapellmeister.

The next year Handel paid a visit to London, and there Aaron Hill, director of the Haymarket Theater, engaged him to compose the opera of "Rinaldo," which was written in a fortnight, and was marvelously successful. Some *morceaux* from it, such as the lovely "Lascia ch'io pianga," "Cara sposa," and the March, are still performed. This opera was put on the stage with a magnificence then, and even now, unusual; and a flight of real birds in the scene of the gardens of Armida is given as an example of the clever devices of stage management, though the "Spectator," in referring to it, hints that the birds, by knocking over the candles and flying all over the place, were little else than a nuisance. Welsh, the music publisher, made £1500 by publishing the airs of the opera, and Handel, who possessed a considerable vein of dry humor, remarked on this, "My dear sir, as it is only right that we should be upon an equal footing, *you* shall compose the next opera, and *I* will sell it!"

After returning for a short time to Hanover, Handel was in England again in 1713, when the grand "Te Deum" and "Jubilate" composed by him on the occasion of the Peace of Utrecht, were performed in St. Paul's Cathedral before Queen Anne and the Houses of Parliament, and the Queen was so enraptured with these compositions that she bestowed upon the composer a pension of £200 a year for life.

Handel was in no hurry to return to Hanover; in fact he remained in England and ignored his engagement across the sea. But retribution was at hand. The Elector of Hanover, on the death of Queen Anne, came to England as the new king, and his delinquent kapellmeister could hardly expect to receive royal

favor in future. He determined, however, if possible, to conciliate the King, and wrote twenty-five short concerted pieces and had them performed by musicians in a boat following the royal barge on the Thames one day when the King went up the river for a picnic. The King recognized the composer by his style, spoke in praise of the music, and the news was quickly conveyed to the anxious musician. This is the story of the origin of the famous "Water Music." Soon afterward the King allowed Handel to play before him, and finally peace was made between them, Handel being appointed music-master to the royal children, and receiving an additional pension of £200. In 1726 a private Act of Parliament was passed making George Frederick Handel a naturalized Englishman.

Handel was for some years director of the music at Cannons, the magnificent residence of the Duke of Chandos, where he composed the "Chandos Anthems" and the "Harmonious Blacksmith." The last piece is one of "Suites de pièces pour le clavecin," and the story connected with it, though much doubted, is about as well established as most musical anecdotes are.

One day, it is said, Handel was overtaken by a shower while passing on foot through the village of Edgeware, and took refuge in the house of one Powell a blacksmith. Under shelter in the smithy he watched Powell at his work. As he labored at the anvil, the blacksmith sang an old song, while the strokes of his hammer resounded in regular cadence with the notes, and Handel perceived that the sounds from the anvil were in the same key as those of the song, and formed a sort of continuous bass to it. The

song, with its accompaniment, lingered in his memory, and the same evening he composed "The Harmonious Blacksmith."

In 1720 a number of noblemen formed themselves into a company for the purpose of reviving Italian opera in England at the Haymarket Theater, and subscribed a capital of £50,000. The King himself subscribed £1000, and allowed the society to take the name of the Royal Academy of Music. Handel was appointed director of the music. Bononcini and Attilio Ariosti, his old acquaintances in Berlin, were attracted by this new venture to London, and a very novel competition followed. The libretto of a new opera, "Muzio Scevola," was divided between the three composers. Attilio was to put the first act to music, Bononcini the second, and Handel the third. We need hardly wonder that the victory is said to have rested with the last and youngest of the trio, although the cabals against him, which afterward did him such grievous harm, had already commenced. In connection with this rivalry a clever epigram is often quoted, sometimes as Swift's, though it really was by John Byrom, the Lancashire poet:

> Some say, compared to Bononcini,
> That Mynheer Handel's but a Ninny;
> Others aver that he to Handel
> Is scarcely fit to hold a Candle:
> Strange all this difference should be
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

Of the many operas written for the Royal Academy of Music, all, except in name, have long been forgotten. As might have been expected, the noblemen's enterprise did not succeed, and in eight years they

had spent the whole of their £50,000, and then had to close the theater. But Handel was not dismayed. He had saved £10,000, and on the collapse of the noblemen's company he took the theater himself. The speculation, however, proved a terribly losing one. But if he had not at last lost confidence in his labors of tricking out Italian insipidities in music far too good for them, he might not so soon have discovered where lay his real strength—as a composer of *sacred* music. The year 1732 was memorable for the performance at the Haymarket Theater of his first great English oratorio, "Esther," and this, having proved a great success, was followed by the cantata "Acis and Galatea," and the oratorio "Deborah."

Handel still clung to his operatic speculation; and when he had to leave the Haymarket Theater, which was given up to another Italian company, he changed to the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theater and began again. More unsuccessful operas were produced, and at last, in 1737, having lost the whole of his hard-earned money, Handel was compelled to close the theater and suspend payment for a time. He now again turned his thoughts to oratorio. "Saul" and "Israel in Egypt" were composed in quick succession; the last gigantic work being written in twenty-seven days. These works were followed by his fine setting of Dryden's "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," and Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso"; but it cannot be said that his pecuniary affairs were materially improved by their production.

A journey to Ireland, in 1741, will always be remembered in connection with his immortal work "The Messiah," which was first performed for the benefit of charitable institutions in Dublin in the following

spring. The performance took place at Neale's Music Hall on April 18, 1742, at midday, and, apropos of the absurdities of fashion, it may be noticed that the announcements contained the following request: "That ladies who honor this performance with their presence, will be pleased to come *without hoops,* as it will greatly increase the charity by making room for more company." The work was gloriously successful, and £400 was obtained the first day for the Dublin charities.

Handel seems always to have had a special feeling with regard to this masterpiece of his—as if it were too sacred to be merely used for making money by, like his other works. He very frequently assisted at its performance for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, and he left the score as a precious gift to the governor of that institution. This work brought £10,299 to the funds of the hospital. In this connection a fine saying of his may be repeated. Lord Kinnoul had complimented him on the noble "entertainment" which by "The Messiah" he had lately given the town. "My lord," said Handel, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them—*I wish to make them better.*" And when some one questioned him on his feelings when composing the Hallelujah Chorus, he replied in his peculiar English, "I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God himself." What a striking remark that was of poor old George III, in describing the "pastoral symphony" in this oratorio—"I could see the stars shining through it!"

The now constant custom of the audience to rise and remain standing during the performance of this chorus, is said to have originated in the following

manner. On the first production of the work in London, "the audience were exceedingly struck and affected by the music in general; but when that chorus struck up, 'For the Lord God Omnipotent,' in the 'Hallelujah,' they were so transported that they all together, with the King (who happened to be present), started up and remained standing till the chorus ended. This anecdote I had from Lord Kinnoul." So says Dr. Beattie, the once famous poet, in one of his letters.

"The Messiah" was commenced on August 22, 1741, finished on September 12, and the orchestration filled up two days afterward—the whole work thus being completed in twenty-three days. Handel was fifty-six years old at the time.

The next ten years of the life of the "Goliath of Music," as he has been called, are marked by some of the most splendid achievements of his genius. "Samson," the "Dettingen Te Deum," "Joseph," "Belshazzar," "The Occasional Oratorio," "Judas Maccabæus," "Joshua," "Solomon," and "Theodora" being composed during this time, when, already an old man, it might have been thought that he would have taken some repose after the labors of so toilsome and troubled a life. But, as in the case of Milton, his greatest works were those of his old age. "Judas Maccabæus" was perhaps the most successful at the time. It was commissioned by Frederick, Prince of Wales, to celebrate the victory of his brother, the Duke of Cumberland, at Culloden, over the Pretender and his forces. The words were compiled by a poetaster named Morell, who fulsomely dedicated the work to the conqueror. This Duke of Cumberland was in reality a very unherolike leader, and had sullied his

victory with cold-blooded butchery of prisoners taken in war; but Handel probably thought very little about the man whose name was to be inscribed on the work, when he wrote the sublime music celebrating the deeds of the great Jewish liberator. "The Messiah," "Israel in Egypt," "Samson," and "Judas" may be said to be his grandest works.

But a terrible misfortune was approaching—his eyesight was failing. The "drop serene," of which Milton speaks so pathetically, had fallen on his eyes, and at the time when, in February, 1752, he was composing his last work, "Jephthah," the effort in tracing the lines is in the original manuscript painfully apparent. Soon afterward he submitted to three operations, but they were in vain, and henceforth all was to be dark to him. His sole remaining work was now to improvise on the organ, and to play at performances of his oratorios.

One night on returning home from a performance of "The Messiah" at Covent Garden, Handel was seized with sudden weakness and retired hurriedly to bed, from which he was never to rise again. On April 14, 1759, he quietly passed away, at the age of seventy-four. His remains were laid in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, and the place is marked by a statue by Roubilliac, representing him leaning over a table covered with musical instruments, his hand holding a pen, and before him is laid "The Messiah," open at the words "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Handel is described as being of large and portly figure, with a countenance full of fire and dignity, eyes remarkably bright, short and prominent eyebrows, and finely marked and handsome features. "Handel's

general look," says Burney, "was somewhat heavy and sour, but when he did smile it was like his sire the sun bursting out of a black cloud. There was a sudden flash of intelligence, wit, and good humor beaming in his countenance which I hardly ever saw in any other."

He was a man of honor and integrity, and of an uncompromising independence of character. "In an age when artists used to live in a sort of domesticity to the rich and powerful, he refused to be the dependent of any one, and preserved his dignity with a jealous care." This, no doubt, irritated those great people whose vanity was gratified when men of genius lived by their patronage; but, on the other hand, it must be admitted that his temper was naturally irascible and even violent, and his fits of passion, while they lasted, quite ungovernable. Even when he was conducting concerts for the Prince of Wales, if the ladies of the court talked instead of listening, "his rage was uncontrollable, and sometimes carried him to the length of swearing and calling names, whereupon the gentle Princess would say to the offenders, 'Hush, hush! Handel is angry.'" Handel was plain-spoken, and would not give in to any one if he knew he was in the right.

Handel's life-work falls naturally into two divisions. In each of these he was during his lifetime admittedly preëminent; but while opera since his day has developed with extraordinary rapidity, oratorio has tended to advance but little upon specially characteristic lines; therefore even to the casual hearer of to-day Handel's oratorios still represent the highest human achievement in this particular department of music,

while his operas are as a rule summarily dismissed as being too old-fashioned in structure to merit more than a passing word.

It is commonly said that Handel's operas are merely a string of solos and duets with a chorus to bring down the curtain. A cursory examination of the works in question reveals that this is not the case. Handel used the chorus in his operas more freely than is usually stated, and when occasion demanded he wrote concerted numbers for solo voices in a manner ordinarily looked upon as the invention of a much later age. It is noticeable, too, that as Handel advanced in years and experience he used the chorus more freely. But at no time did he permit the rules and conventions that governed opera in his day to override his own judgment.

It would be useless to try to review Handel's operas in detail. By reason of their subjects perhaps even more than their intrinsic musical value some of them appeal to a modern audience far less than others. Many of the librettos which he set are inane rubbish, but no one who turns their pages can fail to be struck by the amazing force with which he gave realization to any spark of human interest which the situation contained.

Apart from the majestic and impeccable form of Handel's oratorios, the point in them that must infallibly strike the most casual observer is their immense range of thought. Handel's imagination was irrepressible, his sympathy was boundless. Nothing was strange to him; he could take every point of view. He who, when writing the Hallelujah Chorus, "did see all heaven, and the great God himself," was equally at

home in the high places of heathendom. Whatever his own religious views may have been—and his contemporaries believed him to be a sincere Christian—he had a most subtle appreciation of pagan rites. His heathens never repeat themselves. Compare, for instance, the brilliant festivities of the Philistines in "Samson" with the "dismal dance around the furnace blue" in "Jephthah"; the frozen elegance of Roman ritual in "Theodora" with the barbaric raptures of the worshipers of Mithra in "Alexander Balus." But religion is only a fraction of the field he covered. He is equally at home in the far-away patriarchal life of the Old Testament as pictured in Caleb's song, "Shall I in Mamre's fertile plain," in "Joshua," in the pomp and glitter of Solomon's court, in the insolent splendor of Belshazzar's feast, in the clash and din of battle in "Deborah," in the cold raptures of martyrdom in "Theodora," in the sunny sparkling life of old Greece in "Semele," in the innocent revels of nymph and shepherd in "Acis." Nothing came amiss to him; the passions and aspirations of the human race are written in his oratorios for all to read.

When we leave Handel's operas for his oratorios we come to more familiar ground. The operas are practically unknown to modern musicians, but though the popularity of "The Messiah" has tended to cast the other oratorios into the shade, the latter, with few exceptions, are still occasionally performed.

It is commonly said of Handel by those whose knowledge of his works is bounded on the one hand by "The Messiah" and on the other by the celebrated "Largo," that he had but one style for every subject. It is true that his style is strongly marked and indi-

vidual, and it may well be that a man—even a musician—whose experience has been confined entirely to modern music, would derive an impression of monotony from Handel's works, largely because the methods of expression common to all eighteenth-century composers differ so widely from those now in common use as to constitute almost a different musical language.

It is a grave injustice to Handel that fate has fixed on "The Messiah" as the one work by which he should be known to the general public of to-day; for "The Messiah," incomparable as it is, represents the many-sidedness of his genius singularly ill. His unerring instinct bade him in "The Messiah" adopt a severer and a more reticent mode of expression than he employed in any of his other works. He felt that in treating a subject of this character the noblest of all instruments, the human voice, should be supreme, and he voluntarily denied himself the assistance of those orchestral devices which in his other oratorios he employed with such admirable effect. The orchestration of "The Messiah" is simpler and less ornate than in any of Handel's other oratorios, and over the whole work there breathes an air of gravity and solemn restraint, admirably in keeping with the tremendous subject, but by no means typical of the composer, whose feeling for picturesque detail, and whose knowledge of its application were consummately acute. Yet as an expression of Handel's attitude to life in general and to Christianity in particular "The Messiah" is a document of extreme value. Nevertheless, it cannot be repeated too often that a knowledge of "The Messiah" is very far from connoting a knowledge of Handel. A man who

knows Handel only by "The Messiah" can have no conception of his passionate love for outdoor Nature and of his inimitable gift of recording her various phases in music.

Before concluding we must refer to the question of Handel's borrowings from other composers. That he did borrow is undeniable. But if he had borrowed or adapted or stolen far more than he did he would only have done what every great man has done to his heart's content. Chaucer translated freely from Jacobus de Voragine, Boccaccio, and many others. Shakespeare borrowed nearly all his plots and often versified Plutarch when it suited his purpose. Molière boasted that he took what he liked from whom he liked. The sources of "Paradise Lost" are notorious. Handel is in good company at any rate, and no one seriously pretends that the question of his debts to other men can affect our ultimate estimate of his genius.

"Handel," says R. A. Streatfeild, "is the Shakespeare of music; but he has left us no such record of himself as Shakespeare did in the sonnets, if, that is to say, Mr. Sidney Lee's latest published opinion permits us to regard them as autobiographical. . . . Handel's personality is elusive. He took delight in his work for its own sake. He never preaches; he never moralizes. Handel is always an artist. . . . Nevertheless, to those who know his works intimately, the nature of Handel and his attitude to life are revealed in what he has written. Handel was an incurable optimist. He had that worship of beauty for its own sake that is inevitably allied to optimism. There are certain phases of modern thought which are not repre-



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sented in his music, and it is partly from their absence that his appeal to the world of to-day is less potent than formerly. He loved life and drank deep of it; he looked upon death and was not afraid. There is nothing morbid in Handel. He was as blind to the beauty of decay as was the sculptor of the Elgin marbles. His view of life was simple, but it was magnificently sane. His music has a tonic force which it is not for our good that we neglect."

GLUCK
(1714-1787)



CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

IN contrast with the work of many great composers, the best of Gluck's was done late in life. In fact, before fifty he produced little that was of lasting value. Of the operas written when he was between thirty and forty, and produced at the Haymarket Theater in London, Handel said, and with a good deal of justice, "Sir, they are detestable! The fellow knows no more counterpoint than my cook!" But it is not too much to say that no works have had more effect in reforming the lyric stage than the magnificent productions which followed them, all written when he was in advanced middle age.

Christoph Willibald (afterward Ritter von) Gluck was born at Weidenwang, near Neumarkt, Germany, July 2, 1714. His parents were in a humble position in the household of Prince Lobkowitz, at Eisenberg, and he seems at first to have been left to pick up what education he could in the kitchen and the fields, no very satisfactory training-school for him. When he was twelve years of age, however, he was fortunate enough to be sent to the Jesuit School at Komotau, in Bohemia, and here the good fathers gave him his first instruction, not only in ordinary school lore, but also in playing the violin and organ.

After he had been there a few years his father died, and the poor youth was left entirely to his own re-

sources. He went to Prague, and having acquired some knowledge of the violin and violoncello, he used to earn a scanty living as an itinerant musician, singing, when he could get an engagement, in the churches and, like Haydn, playing the violin at fairs and the village dances of the peasants. The life was hard, and the pay poor enough; but on one thing the lad had already resolved—a musician he would be and nothing else. In his ramblings he at last reached Vienna, and as he was not quite forgotten in Prince Lobkowitz's household, he was allowed to play there, and the Prince, with his friends, listening after dinner to the youth's playing, nodded approvingly, and said, "Really, not so bad! There is talent, decidedly some talent, in the fellow!"

In those days the great thing was to have a patron; and Gluck, who, thanks to his own energy, self-reliance, and study of human nature, was always successful in securing wealthy friends, soon gained an influential patron in the person of Prince Melzi, who gave him a place in his own private band. Soon afterward the Prince took him to Milan, and placed him under the instructions of Sammartini, a learned theorist.

Before long he began to compose operas, which were produced at the theaters of Milan, Venice, and Turin. These, like Handel's early operas, quickly caught the melody-loving ear of the populace, and were immensely successful. So great, indeed, was their success, that Lord Middlesex thought he was doing a good stroke of business in securing him as composer-in-chief for the King's Theater in London.

When Gluck arrived in England, in 1745, the times were unpropitious. The Scotch Rebellion then ab-

sorbed the public interest, and people were too busy discussing the political situation in their coffee-houses and drawing-rooms to have inclination or time to go to the theater. What was this new piece, "The Fall of the Giants" (La Caduta de' Giganti) by Mr. Gluck, to them, at a time when the fall of the English ministry, and even of the reigning sovereign, was possible? And, truth to tell, the new opera was poor stuff; and neither did "Artamene," an old opera touched up again, or "Piramo e Tisbe," a pasticcio, or compilation of pretty airs from his other works, succeed any better. Indeed, if Gluck had finished his artistic career at this time, Handel's criticism would have been a sufficiently fair judgment on it.

Though discomfited and sorely mortified by his failure in London, Gluck was able calmly to ponder over his defeat and learn its lesson. Shortly before he left London, he appeared at the theater in a very unexpected character. Consoling himself with the idea that if people would not listen to him as a composer they might as a performer, he played, as the "General Advertiser" of the day says, "at the little theater in the Haymarket, a concerto on twenty-six drinking-glasses tuned with spring-water, accompanied by the whole band, being a new instrument of his own invention, upon which he performs whatever may be done on a violin or harpsichord."

From London he went to Paris, and thence to Vienna, where for some time he lived in retirement, quietly studying that vexed question of music and the drama, which, in later days, Wagner again made prominent. The Abbé Arnaud had said, "Italian opera is only a concert for which the play is the pretext."

Gluck began to find out that this was true, and that art had been forgotten in the too eager desire to please, no matter how. He resolved to make a change, and to begin his work again on an entirely new basis.

But in the meantime he must live; so, being invited to Rome and Naples, he composed "Telemacco," "La Clemenza di Tito," and other operas, which, in form at least, differed little from the ordinary florid Italian operas of the day. At Florence he met Ranieri di Calzabigi, and in collaboration with him as librettist Gluck wrote his first opera in the reformed style, "Orfeo ed Euridice." This was produced in Vienna in 1762, and created a great sensation, having a run of twenty-eight nights—then almost unprecedented.

But Gluck was not able at once to release himself from the fetters of the still fashionable florid style, for he always took great pains to pose as the courtier, and having princes and archduchesses among his pupils, he had to supply them with the musical fare that they could appreciate. One of the unsubstantial Italian operas written by him about this time, "Il Parnasso confuso," received the extraordinary honor of being acted with four archduchesses in the cast, and the Archduke Leopold playing the accompaniment on the clavecin.

In the same style as "Orfeo" were "Alceste" and "Paride ed Elena," which followed it. Poet and musician were here of one accord. Both discarded the foolish, tasteless superfluity of ornament in diction and music, and aimed at truthful expression of the emotions rather than at the brilliant display of tropes, trills, cadences, and pretty conceits. The reception given to "Alceste" did not please the composer, al-

though it was frequently performed, and obtained a considerable share of the popular favor. The critics fell foul of it, and Gluck took an opportunity of very savagely castigating them in a dedicatory letter written by him on the publication of "Paride ed Elena." Like Wagner, Gluck was no mean hand with his pen.

Of the new style of operatic composition introduced by him, he wrote the following memorable words, the lesson of which is as valuable now as it was when they were first written: "My purpose has been to restrict the art of music to its true object—that of aiding the effect of poetry by giving greater expression to the words and scenes, but without interrupting the action of the plot, and without weakening the impression by needless instrumentation."

Whatever the cause, Gluck began to meditate a change of scene, and an invitation sent to him from the French Académie Royale to visit Paris made him decide to remove to that capital. In this purpose he was warmly encouraged by the Bailli du Rollet, an attaché of the French embassy, an enthusiastic supporter of Gluck's new musical theory. Du Rollet was also something of a poet, and in conjunction with the composer he put together the libretto of a new opera which was to be bestowed on the Parisians, "Iphigénie en Aulide," founded on Racine's play. In 1773 Gluck, then being fifty-nine years of age, set out for Paris, where the most important part of his life was to be lived.

Gluck found a potent patroness in his former pupil, Marie Antoinette, now the dauphiness of France; in fact, she soon was at the head of an organized party in his favor. When "Iphigénie" was first performed,

she led the applause, which, as the opera proceeded, became spontaneous enough—soldiers and courtiers waving their swords, and the multitude, carried away by the beauty and dramatic truth of the music, vehemently applauding. Sophie Arnould, the witty and charming actress, was an admirable Iphigénie, and a M. Larrivée, who was accustomed to sing so much through his nose that the people in the pit, when applauding him after a song, used to say, "That nose has really a magnificent voice," forgot for that evening his nasal twang and was a magnificent Agamemnon. Marie Antoinette was in ecstasies over this success.

Then came "Orphée et Eurydice," adapted from the Vienna setting of the same piece. Sutherland Edwards, in his "History of the Opera," relates some amusing incidents in connection with its production. Gluck's artistic soul was greatly vexed by the obstinate pretensions of the male dancer, Vestris (who maintained that there were only three great men in Europe—Voltaire, Frederick the Great, and himself). When the rehearsals were going on, this great man indulgently said to the composer, "Write me the music of a *chaconne,* Monsieur Gluck!" "A *chaconne!*" was the indignant answer; "do you think the Greeks, whose manners we are endeavoring to depict, knew what a *chaconne* was?" "Did they not?" Vestris imperturbably replied. "Then they are indeed much to be pitied." This was the man who once said, "If the god of the dance [a title he had given himself] touches the ground from time to time, he does so in order not to humiliate his comrades."

It was not easy to drill the actors into the proper expression and style of acting. Here is a story of an at-

tempt which an actress, Marthe le Rochois, made to improve the acting of another one, Desmatins, who took the part of Medea deserted by Jason: "Inspire yourself with the situation," she said; "fancy yourself in the poor woman's place. If you were deserted by a lover whom you adored, what would you do?" "I should look out for another," was the reply of the practically-minded girl.

Gluck at rehearsal must have been an interesting sight, and it is not to be wondered at that the rehearsals of "Orphée" were crowded; it became quite the fashionable thing for the courtiers to attend them. On sitting down in the orchestra his invariable plan was to take his coat off; he then removed his wig, and substituted for it a cotton nightcap of the most primitive fashion, and thus at his ease, in his shirt-sleeves and nightcap, he comfortably conducted. At the end, it is said, he had never any trouble in resuming these articles of dress, as dukes and marquises used to contend for the honor of handing them to him.

The dauphiness was again so delighted with Gluck's work, that after the success of "Orphée" she granted him a pension of 6,000 francs, and the same sum in addition to be received by him for every new work that he bestowed on the French stage.

After "Alceste," rearranged for the French stage, and produced with the utmost success, Gluck set to work on the composition of a new opera, "Armida," which he intended should be his answer to all his detractors—his *chef-d'œuvre*. To the dauphiness he said, in a burst of self-satisfaction, "The opera will soon be finished, and indeed it will be superb." And to his old friend Du Rollet he writes, "I have put forth all the

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little strength still left in me in order to finish 'Armida.' I must confess I should like to finish my career with it." But he did not then anticipate the stirring times and the hard fighting still before him. Marie Antoinette was not the only female potentate in France; there was another, less respectable, but equally powerful, the notorious Madame du Barry. As the dauphiness had her pet musician, Madame du Barry must have hers too, and so she sent to Rome and ordered a musician! In due time Piccinni, who was really a talented composer, appeared in Paris, and the famous war of the Gluckists and Piccinnists soon began. "Sir, are you a Gluckist or a Piccinnist?" became a shibboleth, on the answer to which almost life or death depended! It was known that Piccinni's "Rolando" was to be produced a few months after Gluck's "Armida," and expectation ran high. Marie Antoinette, now Queen of France, still staunchly stood by her protégé, and Gluck cannot be said to have neglected any means of retaining her friendship.

Greatly as Gluck prized his own "Armida," and immense as was the popularity it afterward attained, the first production in 1777 does not seem to have been attended with great *éclat*. Perhaps the public were too much excited just then with the prospect of the approaching performance of Piccinni's "Rolando." This had taken some time to compose, for Piccinni labored under the disadvantage of not knowing a word of French, and Marmontel, the author of the libretto, had to write down under each French word its Italian equivalent, a labor which made Marmontel say that he was not only Piccinni's poet, but also his dictionary. When it was produced, its graceful melodies and

smooth, sparkling music produced an extraordinary success, and it could not be denied that in the first encounter the Italian had the best of it. Even Marie Antoinette appears to have swerved from her fidelity to Gluck; for soon after "Rolando" was given, she appointed Piccinni her singing-master.

This rivalry was taken advantage of, though certainly not in the most honorable way, by Devismes, the astute manager of the Opera. What an exciting contest it would be—what an amusing affair for everybody—if Gluck and Piccinni could both be set to work on the same piece, and so fight out the "battle of the styles" under the same conditions! Only the worst of it would be, that the first piece performed, if successful, would destroy any chance of the other having a fair hearing. This Piccinni, who had a far higher opinion of Gluck's merits than his supporters had, represented plaintively to Devismes, and the latter earnestly assured him that his own opera should be given first, and Gluck's second. Probably an assurance exactly similar was given to Gluck, and the two composers, taking the libretto given them, "Iphigénie en Tauride," set to work upon their rival labors.

When Piccinni had completed two acts of his piece, he was horror-struck to hear that Gluck's was already finished and had been put in rehearsal at the Opera. He of course rushed off to Devismes, demanding to know the meaning of this; but the manager very coldly informed him that it could not be helped; he had received a royal command to produce the opera at once; he profoundly regretted, etc., etc. The poor Italian was completely outmaneuvered and had to submit to this situation as well as he might.

Unluckily for the Italian, Gluck's "Iphigénie" proved to be a masterpiece, and then and ever since it has been acknowledged to be his greatest work. Piccinni was filled with such consternation on hearing this magnificent music, and comparing it with his own, that he begged to be allowed to withdraw from the bargain to produce his own "Iphigénie." But the cruel Devismes was inexorable, and soon after Gluck's, Piccinni's piece was played. The first night the public seemed to reserve their opinion upon it, and the second night another incident in the chapter of accidents befell the unlucky Italian. Mademoiselle Laguerre, who took the principal character, was most indubitably drunk. She staggered and stammered, made eyes at the pit, and altogether disgraced herself.

"This is not Iphigenia in Tauris," said Sophie Arnould, her witty and malicious rival; "it is Iphigenia in Champagne!"

King Louis happened to be present that night, and in exercise of the despotic power which he wielded for his subjects' good, he consigned the young lady to prison for a couple of days. On her reappearance she sang so well, and so cleverly gave a special meaning to some lines expressive of remorse that the public forgave her, and she was restored to favor, but Piccinni's "Iphigénie en Tauris" was not so fortunate. The composer had lost, and this time the victory rested with the German.

After writing "Echo et Narcisse," which was something of a failure, Gluck set to work upon another opera, "Les Danaïdes," but an apoplectic stroke compelled him to give up the work, which he handed over to his pupil Salieri (Mozart's crafty rival) to finish.

Gluck had made an ample fortune—about 700,000 francs by his four operas—and in 1780 he wisely determined, being then sixty-six years of age, to retire to spend his last days in quiet at Vienna. He left the field where still Gluckists and Piccinnists wrangled over the merits of their champions, and tranquilly spent his few remaining years in retirement, where, nevertheless, he was frequently visited by the great and illustrious of the world, among others the Emperor and Empress of Russia, and found some consolation in the knowledge that he was not yet forgotten. And indeed in his works there was that imperishable stuff that even yet preserves Gluck's music fresh in the remembrance and love of all who care for art. He was struck down by a second attack of apoplexy in 1787, and died on the 15th of November.

If Gluck's achievements as a reformer have been overestimated by some musical historians, his value as a composer can hardly be exaggerated. He is the principal spokesman of a period of reaction, and it is to his eternal credit that his profound realization of the hollowness and artificiality of the older school of opera drove him into no excesses by way of counteracting the abuses which he strove to combat. His career is a picture, perhaps unequaled in the history of music, of a constant striving toward a pure ideal of art, a perfect blending of the lyrical and dramatic elements of opera, which he attained by a balanced power of intellect such as few musicians have possessed.

For years after his visit to England Gluck continued to write in the accepted style of the day. It is likely that a visit to Paris, which followed his un-

lucky expedition to London, opened his eyes to the possibility of reform in operatic treatment. In Paris he heard the music of Rameau, a composer whose influence in the formation of his later style was very important. French opera had never followed Italian taste in its worship of purely lyrical to the exclusion of dramatic expression, and Rameau carried the departure still further. In Gluck's case, the direction that new paths were to take was revealed to him by his introduction to Rameau's music. Gluck's genius, however, was infinitely greater than Rameau's; where Rameau is cold and formal, Gluck vibrates with human passion.

The history of opera is a continual struggle between the two opposing forces of dramatic and lyrical expression, and Gluck's career is to a certain extent a miniature reproduction of the same struggle. We may look on it perhaps as a contest between instinct and theory. His instinct led him to lyrical expression, but his theories on opera compelled him to pay due respect to dramatic truth. The struggle is interesting to trace; first one force gains the upper hand, then the other. In "Orfeo," largely, no doubt, because of its subject, the lyrical element is all-important. "Alceste" is more dramatic in subject, and the result is that, as Gluck had not yet fully succeeded in getting his theory into working order, or rather did not handle it with the command that he subsequently gained, there is a good deal in it that is merely arid declamation with very little musical value at all. In "Paride ed Elena" the lyrical element is again supreme, but in "Iphigénie en Aulide" the dramatic once more asserts itself. "Armide" and "Iphigénie en Tauride" repre-



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sent the culmination of Gluck's career, and in these two works we find what may justly be called a perfect balance between the two contending influences.

"Iphigénie en Aulide" differed widely in some respects from Gluck's previous works. The canvas is more crowded with figures, the emotions treated are more varied in their range. The work lacks the large simplicity of motive of "Orfeo" and "Alceste"; it is more minute in its psychological analysis, and subtler in its play of passion. In "Iphigénie en Aulide" Gluck has moments of supreme grandeur and beauty, such as the noble monologue of Agamemnon and the wonderful scene in which Clytemnestra pours forth her soul in tempest; but in much of it the treatment is too consciously dramatic rather than operatic.

Gluck's theory as to the *raison d'être* of opera led him into strange passes, but his natural instinct was sound. He told his contemporaries that the musician's duty was to follow the words of the libretto, heightening their force by a discreet accompaniment; but his greatest triumphs were won when he forgot about the poor, cold words that he had to set, and went behind them to the feeling and emotions that underlay them.

In "Armide" Gluck's instinct took its revenge upon his reason. He told a friend that he had written it more in the spirit of a poet and a painter than of a musician. However that may be, it is of all his works the richest in musical beauty. It has a voluptuous charm such as no music of Gluck's had previously possessed; in fact, such as was practically new to music altogether. The curious thing about "Armide" is that the libretto was one originally written by Quinault for Lulli some hundred years before Gluck took it in hand.

Gluck, no doubt, was attracted by the romantic nature of the subject; but it is strange that he, who was so particular about his libretti, should have been content with so dreary and frigid a piece of work as this. However, his triumph was the greater, for he certainly owed nothing to the bald diction and conventional sentiments of his libretto.

"Armide" stands alone among Gluck's works, a strangely romantic figure in its sternly classical surroundings. In "Armide" Gluck shook himself free for once of his theories about opera and art and expression, and wrote as his natural instinct prompted him. There is little dramatic interest in "Armide"; it is concerned almost entirely with emotion, which is as much as to say that it is an ideal subject for opera. Had the libretto been worthy of the subject, there is no saying what Gluck might not have made of it. As it is, he produced a work which curiously anticipates the romantic triumphs of a later day, and has a peculiar value of its own to the student of Gluck's musical character.

"Iphigénie en Tauride" is usually spoken of as Gluck's masterpiece, and so in a sense it is, though the almost total absence of love-interest robs it of a natural source of enchantment. In form it certainly is more perfect than any other work of Gluck's, the balance between lyrical and dramatic expression being preserved with singular justness. Though it can hardly be said to represent that ideal at which Gluck had been aiming all his life, it is a work of the utmost nobility and beauty.

Whether that union of music and drama at which Gluck aimed can be counted among the possibilities

of art is a question that still awaits a satisfactory answer. It is certain that Gluck did not attain it, but, like so many other pioneers, while missing the goal at which he aimed, he did perhaps more for the world than if he had achieved his wished-for end. His operas are certainly not music-dramas in the modern sense of the word, but as a practical protest against the slipshod fashions of the time they accomplished a most valuable work.

Gluck is an interesting figure in other ways. He gives musical expression to the great idea that was animating the world at his time—the return to Nature, so fervidly preached by Rousseau. In an art so essentially conventional as opera, it is obvious that the "return to Nature" could only be effected in a very modified form; and in this respect, as in many others, Gluck often did his best work rather in spite of his theories than because of them. It is significant, indeed, that the one opera of his which still retains a wide popularity, "Orfeo," holds its place on the stage almost entirely by its lyrical qualities, while those in which the dramatic element is especially prominent have passed into something very like oblivion.

On the whole, the most important legacy that Gluck bequeathed to posterity was his conception of an opera as an artistic unity, not as a mere string of songs and dances often connected by the slightest of threads. He had the gift of suffusing each of his works in an atmosphere peculiar to itself, and this, with the noble dignity of his style, and his unfaltering worship of the loftiest artistic ideals, makes him a figure of singular importance in the history of opera.

HAYDN

(1732-1809)

JOSEPH HAYDN

THE story of Haydn's early life is the record of a triumph of determination and enthusiasm over opposing circumstances. It has been said of him that his childhood ended with his sixth year. Certain it is that almost from that time began a struggle with hard fortune; but an indomitable cheerfulness and devotion to his art carried Haydn safely through troubled waters.

His father, who was a wheelwright, and a typical hard-working, independent Austrian peasant, lived in the village of Rohrau, where on March 31, 1732, Franz Joseph Haydn was born. The father had learned to play the harp by ear, and was fond of singing the old peasant Lieder to its accompaniment.

Gradually he noticed that his little Joseph was attracted by musical sounds; and when one day he came upon him sitting outside the schoolhouse window scraping two pieces of wood together in imitation of the schoolmaster, who was playing the violin within, he made up his mind that his son was to be a musician. In time he might even become a choir-master, like his cousin Johann Mathias Frankh at Hainburg! Frau Haydn had cherished the idea of his becoming a priest, and was at first bitterly opposed to her husband's plans, but her scruples were gradually overcome. The

boy was delighted at the prospect before him; and the matter was decided by a visit from Cousin Frankh, who tested his voice and offered to take him with him to Hainburg and train him with his other choristers.

From Frankh the young Haydn received, as he afterward wrote to a friend, "more blows than victuals," and he mentions how distressed he was "to find himself becoming a dirty little urchin" for want of his mother's care. But he had inherited a stock of common sense, and his buoyancy of disposition, coupled with his fixed resolve to become the best singer in the choir, helped him to struggle on.

It was to the sweetness of his voice that Haydn owed his first advancement; for when he was eight years old his singing attracted the attention of Reutter, the choir-master at the Church of St. Stephen in Vienna, who was recruiting for trebles. His offer to admit the boy into his choir obtained the ready consent of his parents, and Joseph went off hopefully to Vienna with his new master. The work there was very hard, but worse than that was the fact that though he had more than enough of vocal training, he could get from Reutter no instruction in composition, his longing for which was fast becoming a passion.

He covered with attempts at masses and anthems every piece of paper upon which he could lay his hands, but his timid endeavors to induce Reutter to look at them were only met with ridicule. He was not to be daunted, and a small gift of money from his father was laid out in the purchase of some text-books of musical composition. "The talent was in me," he afterward wrote, "and by dint of hard work I managed to get on." For ten years this state of things

continued, Haydn always persevering with his music, and even deserting the games of his companions for it.

Unfortunately for Haydn, Reutter took a strong dislike to him, and lost no opportunity of showing it. Haydn's mischievous spirit no doubt led him to adopt an attitude which, though commendable, was impolitic; and eventually, in 1749, after some boyish escapade of Haydn's, Reutter seized upon the pretext for discharging him.

Haydn was now only in his eighteenth year, and found himself turned out into the streets of Vienna on a winter's night, with nothing to call his own except his beloved books. He would not go back to his parents; for, if he did, unless he were to become a mere burden upon them he must given up all idea of a musical career. Fortunately he found a friend in need, in the person of another poor musician; and with his help, and a share in his wretched garret, Haydn struggled through the winter, gaining a slender pittance by playing the fiddle at balls and entertainments, and giving music-lessons for miserable pay. At last he enlisted the sympathies of a good-natured tradesman of the name of Buchholz, who lent him 150 florins; and with this sum, which seemed to him a fortune, Haydn made a start.

He was able to hire a room to himself—only an attic, but in the same house where dwelt the Italian poet Metastasio, who became interested in him and introduced him to Porpora, the most eminent master of singing of his time, and from this day Haydn's fortunes began to mend. Porpora was a surly old fellow, and at first little inclined to bestow any attention upon Haydn. Indeed, it was only when he found that the

young enthusiast was ready to perform the most menial offices for an occasional crumb of instruction, that he treated him kindly and gave him a few regular lessons in composition. This episode in Haydn's life is introduced in a charming manner by George Sand in her romance "Consuelo," the "best story of artistic life that has ever been written."

Haydn was now in the way of obtaining more profitable introductions, and by the time he was five-and-twenty he was to be seen at some of the best houses in Vienna in the capacity of accompanist at musical soirées. For his services he received a small sum and a meal at the servants' table. Music was at this time the fashionable craze at Vienna, and a private concert the form of entertainment most affected; but the social position of the artist was that of an upper servant. However, at these houses Haydn made the acquaintance of musicians—among others of Gluck, who had been attracted by his performances; and after a time he found that his position not only enabled him to obtain what seemed to him magnificent payment for his lessons, but also—and this was a matter nearer his heart—to induce publishers to accept his compositions. Slowly but surely his genius raised him above the level of his fellows, and influential people began to interest themselves in him; the happy result of all being an appointment (in 1759) as kapellmeister, or master of music, in the establishment of a wealthy Bohemian noble, Count Morzin.

Connected with Haydn's early years in Vienna is the unhappy story of his first love. Its object was a beautiful girl who was his pupil; but she, unfortunately for Haydn, did not in any way reciprocate his

affection, and was bent upon a life in a cloister. She was the younger of two sisters, and her father, determined to secure this young genius as his son-in-law, spared no effort to induce Haydn to turn his attention to the scornful lady's elder sister. Haydn, in an evil moment, consented to marry the elder girl, a decision of which he bitterly repented when it was too late. Her slight infatuation for him soon wore off, and her nature was wholly ill-suited to his. After some years of domestic wretchedness spent with this woman—with whom no sympathy was possible, and to whom, as he said, it was all the same whether he were an artist or a cobbler—Haydn made an arrangement which virtually amounted to a formal separation.

Soon after Haydn's marriage, which took place in November, 1760, the Morzin household was broken up, but the Count found his protégé another post, that of kapellmeister to Prince Anton Esterhazy, the representative of one of the oldest and noblest Hungarian families. Prince Anton died about a year after the appointment was made, and was succeeded by the Prince Nicolaus Esterhazy, whose lavish patronage of the arts has made his name famous.

Now began for Haydn that prolific period—more than thirty years—of restful and congenial happiness to which the musical world owes so much. Many of his best symphonies, several small operas, much Church music and a mass of chamber music of every description, were the outcome of his activity during this time. Add to this his duties as sole controller of a large orchestra, manager of all the concerts, and instructor of the vocalists, and we may well believe that his time never lay heavy on his hands; albeit the life

at Eisenstadt and Esterhaz, his patron's two seats, was sometimes irksome to him from its very quiet. Haydn was very loyal to his patron, and refused more than one proposal that he should throw up his post and accept lucrative concert engagements; for his compositions had come by this time to be widely known and admired. Whatever irksomeness he may have felt in his life of service to the Prince vanished when he was asked to leave him. "My dearest wish," he wrote to a friend, "is to live and die with him."

The original form of agreement between Haydn and Prince Esterhazy gives us an idea of the position held in such a household by the kapellmeister, at a time when the artist was the dependent of the great man, and, as often as not, on a social level very little higher than that of a lackey. "The said Joseph Haydn," runs one clause, "shall be considered and treated as a member of the household. Therefore his Serene Highness is graciously pleased to place confidence in his conducting himself as becomes an honorable official of a princely house." He is "to appear in the antechamber daily, and inquire whether his highness is pleased to order a performance of the orchestra." It is also enjoined upon him that he is "to abstain from undue familiarity, and from vulgarity in eating, drinking and conversation; not dispensing with the respect due to him, but acting uprightly and influencing his subordinates to preserve such harmony as is becoming in them, remembering how displeasing the consequences of any discord or dispute would be to his Serene Highness."

In common with his orchestra, Haydn wore a prescribed dress; and it is specially noted in his instructions that, when playing before company, all the per-

formers are to appear "in white stockings, white linen, powdered, and either with a pigtail or a tie-wig." For his services Haydn received 400 florins (about $200) annually, and his board at the "officers' table." This salary was eventually almost doubled by the Prince's generosity.

Haydn's works were now selling well, and his reputation had spread far beyond the narrow sphere to which his duties were confined. His musical methods were much discussed; for while the beauty of his work was freely admitted, evidences of unusual power were recognized in its unconventionality. A Viennese journal of the year 1766, in a notice of various prominent musicians, speaks of "Herr Joseph Haydn, our nation's favorite, whose geniality speaks through all his work. His music has beauty, style, purity, and a delicate and noble simplicity which commends it to every hearer."

Till he was fifty-nine Haydn remained faithful to his post with the Prince at Eisenstadt, in Vienna, and at Esterhaz—the miniature Versailles built by the Prince on the banks of the Neusiedler See. The retirement in which much of his life was spent, rather than any unusual rapidity of composition, explains the remarkable number of Haydn's works. In the symphonic form alone he completed sixty-three works during this period. The extent of his industry will appear if we realize that he found time for original work without any neglect of his official duties, comprising the complete arrangement of the daily music, two operatic performances and two or three concerts weekly, besides fêtes given in honor of distinguished visitors.

On September 28, 1790, Prince Nicolaus died—a

great loss for Haydn, who really loved him. He left his kapellmeister, on condition of his retaining the title, an annual pension of 1000 florins, as a mark of esteem and affection. To this sum his successor, Prince Anton, added another 400 florins, but deprived Haydn of his occupation by dismissing the whole chapel, except the few members necessary to keep up the services in church. Haydn now fixed his abode in Vienna, but had hardly done so before Johann Peter Salomon, a German-English musician, appeared on the scene. He had heard of the Prince's death at Cologne, on his way to England, and immediately returned, hoping, now that Haydn was free, to persuade him to visit London. Haydn gave way and began to make preparations for the journey. His last hours in Vienna were enlivened by the company of Mozart, who had come to see him off.

Leaving Vienna on December 15, 1790, Haydn and Salomon proceeded to London. Haydn first put up at the house of Bland, the music-seller, but soon removed to rooms prepared for him at Salomon's. Here he found himself the object of every species of attention; ambassadors and noblemen called on him, invitations poured in from all quarters, and he was surrounded by a circle of the most distinguished artists. All the musical societies eagerly desired his presence at their meetings. His quartets and symphonies were performed and he was enthusiastically noticed in all the newspapers.

Before leaving Vienna Salomon had announced his subscription concerts in the "Morning Chronicle," for which Haydn was engaged to compose six symphonies, and conduct them at the pianoforte. The first of the

series took place on March 11, 1791, in the Hanover Square Rooms. The orchestra, led by Salomon, consisted of 35 or 40 performers. The "Morning Chronicle" gave an animated description of the concert, the success of which was most brilliant, and insured that of the whole series.

About this time Haydn was invited to the annual dinner of the Royal Society of Musicians, and composed for the occasion a march for orchestra, the autograph of which is still preserved by the society. He also attended the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey. He had a good place near the King's box, and never having heard any performance on so grand a scale, was immensely impressed. When the "Hallelujah Chorus" rang through the nave, and the whole audience rose to their feet, he wept like a child, exclaiming, "He is the master of us all."

In the first week of July he went to the Oxford Commemoration, for the honorary degree of Doctor of Music, conferred at Dr. Burney's suggestion. Three grand concerts formed an important feature of the entertainments; at the second of these the "Oxford" symphony was performed, Haydn giving the tempi at the organ; and at the third he appeared in his doctor's gown, amid enthusiastic applause. He sent the University as his "exercise" a composition afterward used for the first of the "Ten Commandments," the whole of which he set to canons during his stay in London.

Haydn was in great request at concerts, and at these many of his own compositions were performed, some of them being "received with an ecstasy of admiration." The concerts over, he made excursions to Windsor Castle, Ascot Races, and

Slough, where he stayed with Herschel, of whose domestic life he gives a particular description in his diary. The only son, afterward Sir John Herschel, was then a few months old. He went also to the meeting of the Charity Children in St. Paul's Cathedral, and was deeply moved by the singing. "I was more touched," says he in his diary, "by this innocent and reverent music than by any I ever heard in my life."

During his absence his wife had had the offer of a small house and garden in the suburbs of Vienna (Windmühle, 73 Kleine Steingasse, now 19 Haydngasse), and she wrote asking him to send her the money for it, as it would be just the house for her when she became a widow. He did not send the money, but on his return to Vienna bought it, added a story, and lived there from January, 1797, till his death.

Haydn left London toward the end of June, 1792, and reached Vienna at the end of July. His reception was enthusiastic, and all were eager to hear his London symphonies. In December, 1792, Beethoven came to him for instruction, and continued to take lessons until Haydn's second journey to England. The relations of these two great men have been much misrepresented. That Haydn had not in any way forfeited Beethoven's respect is evident, as he spoke highly of him whenever opportunity offered, usually chose one of Haydn's themes when improvising in public, scored one of his quartets for his own use, and carefully preserved the autograph of one of the English symphonies. But whatever Beethoven's early feeling may have been, all doubts as to his latest sentiments are set at

rest by his exclamation on his deathbed on seeing a view of Haydn's birthplace, sent to him by Diabelli: "To think that so great a man should have been born in a common peasant's cottage!"

Again invited by Salomon, under special stipulation, to compose six new symphonies, Haydn started on his second journey on January 19, 1794, and arrived in London on February 4. Haydn's engagement with Salomon bound him to compose and conduct six fresh symphonies; and besides these, the former set was repeated.

Among the numerous violinists then in London we must not omit Giardini. Though nearly eighty years of age, he produced an oratorio, "Ruth," at Ranelagh, and even played a concerto. His temper was frightful, and he showed a particular spite against Haydn, even remarking within his hearing, when urged to call upon him, "I don't want to see the German dog." Haydn retorted by writing in his diary, after hearing him play, "Giardini played like a pig."

After the exertions of the season Haydn sought refreshment in the country. An anecdote of this time shows the humor which was so native to him, and so often pervades his compositions. He composed an apparently easy sonata for pianoforte and violin, called it "Jacob's Dream," and sent it anonymously to an amateur who professed himself addicted to the extreme upper notes of the violin. The unfortunate performer was delighted with the opening; here was a composer who thoroughly understood the instrument! but as he found himself compelled to mount the ladder higher and higher, without any chance of coming down again, the perspiration burst out upon his fore-

head, and he exclaimed, "What sort of composition do you call this? The man knows nothing whatever of the violin!"

During the latter months of his stay in London Haydn was much distinguished by the court. At a concert at York House the programme consisted entirely of his compositions, he presided at the pianoforte, and Salomon was leader. The King and Queen, the princesses, the Prince of Wales, and the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester were present, and the Prince of Wales presented Haydn to the King, who, in spite of his almost exclusive preference for Handel, expressed great interest in the music, and presented the composer to the Queen, who begged him to sing some of his own songs. He was also repeatedly invited to the Queen's concerts at Buckingham House; and both King and Queen expressed a wish that he should remain in England and spend the summer at Windsor. Haydn replied that he felt bound not to desert Prince Esterhazy, and was not inclined entirely to forsake his own country. As a particular mark of esteem the Queen presented him with a copy of the score of Handel's Passion Music to Brockes's words.

The second visit to London was a brilliant success. He returned from it with increased powers, unlimited fame, and a competence for life. By concerts, lessons, and symphonies, not counting his other compositions, he had again—as before—made £1200, enough to relieve him from all anxiety for the future. He often said afterward that it was not till he had been in England that he became famous in Germany, by which he meant that though his reputation was high at home, the English first gave him homage and liberal reward.

Haydn left London August 15, 1795, for Vienna. Soon after his return a pleasant surprise awaited him. He was taken by Count Harrach and a genial party of noblemen and gentlemen, first to a small peninsula formed by the Leitha in a park near Rohrau, where he found a monument and bust of himself, and next to his birthplace. Overcome by his feelings, on entering the humble abode Haydn stooped down and kissed the threshold, and then, pointing to the stove, told the company that it was on that very spot that his career as a musician began. On December 18 he gave a concert in the small Redoutensaal, at which three of his London symphonies were performed, and Beethoven played either his first or second clavier concerto.

Haydn had often envied the English their "God save the King," and the war with France having quickened his desire to provide the people with an adequate expression of their fidelity to the throne, he determined to compose a national anthem for Austria. Hence arose "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser," the most popular of all his Lieder. Haydn's friend, Freiherr van Swieten, suggested the idea to the Prime Minister, Graf von Saurau, and the poet Haschka was commissioned to write the words, which Haydn set in January, 1797. On the Emperor's birthday, February 12, the air was sung simultaneously at the National Theater in Vienna, and at all the principal theaters in the provinces. This strain, almost sublime in its simplicity, and so devotional in its character that it is used as a hymn-tune, faithfully reflects Haydn's feelings toward his sovereign. It was his favorite work, and toward the close of his life he often consoled himself by playing it with great expression.

High as his reputation already was, it had not reached its culminating point. This was attained by two works of his old age, "The Creation" and "The Seasons." Shortly before his departure from London, Salomon offered him a poem for music, which had been compiled by Lidley from Milton's "Paradise Lost" before the death of Handel, but not used. Haydn took it to Vienna, and when Freiherr van Swieten suggested his composing an oratorio, he handed him the poem. Van Swieten translated it with considerable alterations, and a sum of 500 ducats was guaranteed by twelve of the principal nobility. Haydn set to work with the greatest ardor. "Never was I so pious," he says, "as when composing 'The Creation.' I knelt down every day and prayed God to strengthen me for my work." It was first given in private at the Schwarzenberg palace, on the 29th and 30th of April, 1798; and in public on Haydn's name-day, March 10, 1799, at the National Theater. The noblemen previously mentioned paid the expenses, and handed over to Haydn the entire proceeds, amounting to 4000 florins (about $1600). The impression it produced was extraordinary; the whole audience was deeply moved, and Haydn confessed that he could not describe his sensations. "One moment," he said, "I was as cold as ice, the next I seemed on fire. More than once I was afraid I should have a stroke." Once only he conducted it outside Vienna—March 9, 1800, at a grand performance in the palace at Ofen before the Archduke Palatine Joseph of Hungary. No sooner was the score engraved (1800) than "The Creation" was performed everywhere. Choral societies were founded for the express purpose, and its popularity

was for long equaled only by that of "The Messiah."

As soon as "The Creation" was finished, Van Swieten persuaded Haydn to begin another oratorio, which he had adapted from Thomson's "Seasons." He consented to the proposition with reluctance, on the ground that his powers were failing; but he began, and in spite of his objections to certain passages as unsuited to music, the work as a whole interested him much, and was speedily completed. Opinions are now divided as to the respective value of the two works, but at the time the success of "The Seasons" fully equaled that of "The Creation," and even now the youthful freshness which characterizes it is very striking. The strain, however, was too great; as he often said afterward, "'The Seasons' gave me the finishing-stroke." On December 26, 1803, he conducted the "Seven Words" for the hospital fund at the Redoutensaal, but it was his last public exertion. In the following year he was asked to conduct "The Creation" at Eisenstadt, but declined on the score of weakness; and indeed he was failing rapidly. His works composed after "The Seasons" are very few, the chief being some vocal quartets, on which he set a high value.

Haydn's last years were passed in a continual struggle with the infirmities of age, relieved by occasional gleams of sunshine. When in a happy mood he would unlock his cabinet, and exhibit to his intimate friends the souvenirs, diplomas, and valuables of all kinds which it contained. He also received visitors, who cannot have failed to give him pleasure, and who came to render homage to the old man. Mozart's widow did not forget her husband's best friend, and her son Wolfgang, then fourteen, begged his blessing at his

first public concert, on April 8, 1805, for which he had composed a cantata in honor of Haydn's seventy-third birthday.

After a long seclusion Haydn appeared in public for the last time at a remarkable performance of "The Creation" at the University on March 27, 1808. He was carried in his armchair to a place among the first ladies of the land, and received with the warmest demonstrations of welcome. Salieri conducted. At the words "And there was light" Haydn was quite overcome, and pointing upward exclaimed, "It came from thence." As the performance went on his agitation became extreme, and it was thought better to take him home after the first part. As he was carried out people of the highest rank thronged to take leave of him, and Beethoven fervently kissed his hand and forehead. At the door he paused, and turning round lifted up his hands as if in the act of blessing.

To one who loved his country so deeply, it was a sore trial to see Vienna twice occupied by the enemy—in 1805 and 1809. The second time the city was bombarded, and the first shot fell not far from his residence. In his infirm condition this alarmed him greatly, but he called out to his servants, "Children, don't be frightened; no harm can happen to you while Haydn is by." The last visit he received on his deathbed (the city being then in the occupation of the French) was from a French officer, who sang "In native worth" with a depth of expression doubtless inspired by the occasion. Haydn was much moved, and embraced him warmly at parting. On May 26, 1809, he called his servants round him for the last time, and having been carried to the piano solemnly played the

Emperor's Hymn three times over. Five days afterward, at one o'clock in the morning of the 31st, he expired. As soon as his death was known, funeral services were held in all the principal cities of Europe.

On June 15 Mozart's "Requiem" was performed in his honor at the Schottenkirche. Among the mourners were many French officers of high rank; and the guard of honor round the catafalque was composed of French soldiers and a detachment of the Bürgerwehr. He was buried in the Hundsthurm churchyard, outside the lines, close to the suburb in which he lived, but his remains were exhumed by command of Prince Esterhazy, and solemnly reinterred in the upper parish church at Eisenstadt on November 7, 1820. A simple stone with a Latin inscription is inserted in the wall over the vault—to inform the passerby that a great man rests below.

It is a well-known fact that when the coffin was opened for identification before the removal, the skull was missing; it had been stolen two days after the funeral. The one which was afterward sent to the Prince anonymously as Haydn's was buried with the other remains; but the real one was retained in the possession of the family of a celebrated physician.

During his latter years Haydn was made an honorary member of many institutions, from several of which he also received gold medals. Poems without end were written in his praise; and equally numerous were the portraits, in chalk or oils, engraved, and modeled in wax. Of the many busts the best is that by his friend Grassy.

A few remarks on Haydn's personal and mental characteristics, and on his position in the history of

art, will conclude our sketch. We learn from his contemporaries that he was below the middle height, with legs disproportionately short. His features were tolerably regular; his expression, slightly stern in repose, invariably softened in conversation. His aquiline nose was latterly much disfigured by a polypus; and his face deeply pitted by smallpox. His complexion was very dark. His dark gray eyes beamed with benevolence; and he used to say himself, "Any one can see by the look of me that I am a good-natured sort of fellow." The impression given by his countenance and bearing was that of an earnest, dignified man, perhaps a little overprecise. Though fond of a joke, he never indulged in immoderate laughter. His broad and well-formed forehead was partly concealed by a wig with side-curls and a pigtail, which he wore to the end of his days. A prominent and slightly coarse under-lip, with a massive jaw, completed this singular union of so much that was attractive and repelling, intellectual and vulgar. He always considered himself an ugly man, and could not understand how so many handsome women fell in love with him. "At any rate," he used to say, "they were not tempted by my beauty," though he admitted that he liked looking at a pretty woman, and was never at a loss for a compliment.

He habitually spoke in the broad Austrian dialect, but could express himself fluently in Italian, and with some difficulty in French. He studied English when in London, and in the country would often take his grammar into the woods. He was also fond of introducing English phrases into his diary. He knew enough Latin to read Fux's "Gradus," and to set the Church

services. Though he lived so long in Hungary, he never learned the vernacular, which was only used by the servants among themselves, the Esterhazy family always speaking German. His love of fun sometimes carried him away; as he remarked to Dies, "A mischievous fit comes over one sometimes that is perfectly beyond control." At the same time he was sensitive, and when provoked by a bad return for his kindness could be very sarcastic. With all his modesty he was aware of his own merits, and liked to be appreciated, but flattery he never permitted. Like a true man of genius, he enjoyed honor and fame, but carefully avoided ambition.

He has often been reproached with cringing to his superiors, but it should not be forgotten that a man who was in daily intercourse with people of the highest rank would have no difficulty in drawing the line between respect and subservience. That he was quite capable of defending his dignity as an artist is proved by the following occurrence. Prince Nicolaus (the second of the name) being present at a rehearsal, and expressing disapprobation, Haydn at once interposed—"Your Highness, all that is my business." He was very fond of children, and they in return loved "Papa Haydn" with all their hearts. He never forgot a benefit, though his kindness to his many needy relations often met with a poor return. The "chapel" looked up to him as a father, and when occasion arose he was an unwearied intercessor on their behalf with the Prince. Young men of talent found in him a generous friend, always ready to aid them with advice and substantial help. His intercourse with Mozart was a striking example of his readiness to acknowledge the

merits of others. He was the first to recognize the genius of Mozart, whom he warmly loved, and whose death he bitterly lamented. Throughout life he was distinguished by industry and method; he maintained a strict daily routine, and never sat down to work or received a visit until he was fully dressed. This custom he kept up long after he was too old to leave the house. His uniform, which the Prince was continually changing in style, he wore only when at his post.

He was a devout Christian, and attended strictly to his religious duties. His genius he looked on as a gift from above, for which he was bound to be thankful. This feeling dictated the inscriptions on all his scores, large and small: "In nomine Domini" at the beginning, and "Laus Deo" at the end.

He sketched all his compositions at the piano—a dangerous proceeding, often leading to fragmentariness of style. When an idea struck him he sketched it out in a few notes and figures; this would be his morning's work; in the afternoon he would enlarge this sketch, elaborating it according to rule, but taking pains to preserve the unity of the idea. "That is where so many young composers fail," he says; "they string together a number of fragments; they break off almost as soon as they have begun; and so at the end the listener carries away no definite impression." He also objected to composers not learning to sing: "Singing is almost one of the forgotten arts, and that is why the instruments are allowed to overpower the voices." The subject of melody he regarded very seriously. "It is the air which is the charm of music," he said, "and it is that which is most difficult to produce. The invention of a fine melody is a work of genius."

Like many other creative artists, Haydn disliked estheticism, and all mere talk about art. He had always a bad word for the critics with their "sharp-pointed pens," especially those of Berlin, who used him very badly in early life. He had, of course, plenty of detractors, among others Kozeluch and Kreibig, who represented him to the Emperor Joseph II as a mere mountebank. Even after he had met with due recognition abroad he was accused of trying to found a new school, though his compositions were at the same time condemned as for the most part hasty, trivial, and extravagant. He sums up his own opinion of his works in these words: *"Sunt mala mixta bonis;* some of my children are well-bred, some ill-bred, and here and there there is a changeling among them." He was perfectly aware of how much he had done for the progress of art. "I know," he said, "that God has bestowed a talent upon me, and I thank him for it; I think I have done my duty, and been of use in my generation by my works; let others do the same."

Haydn's position in the history of music is of the first importance. When we consider the poor condition in which he found certain important departments of music, and, on the other hand, the vast fields which he opened to his successors, it is impossible to overrate his creative powers. Justly called the father of instrumental music, there is scarcely a department throughout its whole range in which he did not make his influence strongly felt. Starting from Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach, he appears forced in between Mozart and Beethoven. All his works are characterized by lucidity, perfect finish, studied moderation, avoidance of meaningless phrases, firmness of

design, and richness of development. The subjects principal and secondary, down to the smallest episodes, are thoroughly connected, and the whole conveys the impression of being cast in one mold. We admire his inexhaustible invention as shown in the originality of his themes and melodies; the life and spontaneity of the ideas; the clearness which makes his compositions as interesting to the amateur as to the artist; the child-like cheerfulness and drollery which charm away trouble and care.

Of the symphony he may be said with truth to have enlarged its sphere, stereotyped its form, enriched and developed its capacities with the versatility of true genius. His later symphonies have completely banished those of his predecessors. The quartet he also brought to its greatest perfection. The life and freshness, the cheerfulness and geniality which give the peculiar stamp to these compositions at once secured their universal acceptance. "It was from Haydn," said Mozart, "that I first learned the true way to compose quartets." Haydn's symphonies encouraged the formation of numerous amateur orchestras; while his quartets became an unfailing source of elevated pleasure in family circles, and thus raised the general standard of musical cultivation. Haydn also left his mark on the sonata. His compositions of this kind exhibit the same vitality, and the same individual treatment; indeed in some of them he seems to step beyond Mozart into the Beethoven period.

His first collections of songs were written to trivial words, and can only be used for social amusement; but the later series, especially the canzonets, rank far higher, and many of them have survived, and are still

heard with delight, in spite of the progress in this particular branch of composition since his day. His canons—some serious and dignified, others overflowing with fun—strikingly exhibit his power of combination. His three-part and four-part songs are excellent compositions, and still retain their power of arousing either devotional feeling or mirth.

His larger masses are a series of masterpieces, admirable for freshness of invention, breadth of design, and richness of development, both in the voice-parts and the instruments. The cheerfulness which pervades them does not arise from frivolity, but rather from the joy of a heart devoted to God, and trusting all things to a Father's care. He told Carpani that "at the thought of God his heart leaped for joy, and he could not help his music doing the same." And to this day, difficult as it may seem to reconcile the fact with the true dignity of Church music, Haydn's masses and offertories are executed more frequently than any others in the Catholic churches of Germany.

Frequent performances of his celebrated oratorios have familiarized every one with the charm and freshness of his melody, and his expressive treatment of the voices, which are invariably supported without being overpowered by refined and brilliant orchestration. In these points none of his predecessors approached him.

When we consider what Haydn did for music, and what his feelings with regard to it were—the willing service he rendered to art, and his delight in ministering to the happiness of others—we cannot but express our love and veneration, and exclaim with gratitude, "Heaven endowed him with genius—he is one of the immortals."

MOZART

(1756-1791)



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

I

THE extraordinary precocity of Mozart's genius has passed into a commonplace of biographers; but there is nothing, even among the anecdotes told of his early feats, that impresses this so vividly upon the mind as does the sight of the little manuscript music-book preserved in the Mozart Museum at Salzburg, Austria. Its first few pages are filled with minuets and trios by various composers. At the end of one of these Mozart's father has written: "The preceding minuets were learned by my little Wolfgang in his fourth year"; and further on: "This minuet and trio Wolfgang learned in half an hour, on the day before his fifth birthday"; while a few pages later we come to a short piece of music, complete and workmanlike in form, against which is written: "By Wolfgang Mozart, 11th May, 1762," i.e., when he was just six years old.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, as he preferred to style himself,* was born January 27, 1756, at Salzburg. His father, a musician of considerable repute in his day, held for a time the post of master of court music, which he resigned in order more completely to devote

* He was christened Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus. Instead of Theophilus his father wrote Gottlieb —in Latin, Amadeus.

himself to his family, and especially to the training of the young Wolfgang. One hardly knows whether to be more astonished at the rapidity with which the boy's musical sense developed or at the ease with which he overcame every difficulty connected with the art. Before he was four years old he used to try to imitate upon the harpsichord everything he heard his sister play; and when his father began to teach him some minuets, he found to his surprise that half an hour's instruction was all the little prodigy needed for each. Before he was six he composed music—sonatas and a concerto—for the harpsichord, and in his seventh year one or two small sonatas of his were published. He seems scarcely to have needed any teaching in the use of the violin, but to have been able to play it by a kind of intuition. It was as though a knowledge of music had come to him, as the enthusiastic Italians afterward declared his operas must have come, "from the stars, ready-made." Like most musicians, he had as a boy a taste for mathematics.

We have it on the authority of an intimate friend of the elder Mozart that the ordinary games of children had but little attraction for Wolfgang unless accompanied by music. "If his playthings were to be moved from one room to another, the one who went empty-handed must sing or play a march on the violin all the time." Though very happy in these early years, he often appeared (as his father afterward wrote to him) rather earnest than childlike, at any rate when music was concerned. When he sat at the harpsichord or was otherwise busied with music, no one ventured to jest with him. Indeed, some fear was felt for his health, so serious and thoughtful did he sometimes appear

beyond his years. Many and astonishing are the stories told of the wonders performed by this baby virtuoso, all serving to emphasize a precocity which becomes the more remarkable when we remember how amply Mozart's later years fulfilled the promise of the first, instead of adding another to the many instances of a brilliant youth followed by a lapse into mediocrity.

But, with all this, Mozart was no hotbed plant. Though, when it was a question of his beloved music, he could be so serious, he was a thoroughly boyish boy, with a nature bright and lovable. He was blessed with a keen sense of fun, as appears throughout his letters, and a happy contentment which rendered him very attractive, while nothing in his character, all his life long, is more delightful than his unaffected simplicity and his modesty.

When the boy was six years old, his father, full of wonder and gratitude for his son's gifts, determined to take him to Vienna, where music was in high favor with the court. He used to relate how at one point in the journey, when a custom-house examination of the luggage promised a tedious delay, the little Wolfgang at once made up to the customs officer and began to play to him on his violin, thereby so charming the official heart that the examination was but slightly insisted on. In Vienna the Emperor and Empress, both accomplished musicians, received the Mozarts very kindly, and could not do too much to show their admiration for the wonderful boy. With such patronage as this, he was naturally fêted everywhere. He was allowed to join the young princesses in their games, and soon became quite at home with them. Marie Antoinette, the ill-fated future Queen of France,

was his special favorite. She had, in the first days of their acquaintance, helped him up from a fall on the polished floors; whereupon he had gravely said to her: "You are good; some day I will marry you."

The following year (1763) the Mozarts went to Paris. At a concert they gave on the way, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, Goethe was among the audience that listened to Wolfgang's playing. As the poet afterward told a friend, he was about fourteen years old himself at the time, and "could still distinctly remember the little man with his wig and sword."

At the court of Versailles another kind reception awaited the Mozarts, and the royal favor was of no small service in directing public attention to their concerts. Evidence regarding the impression produced by the boy's playing is found in the following extract from a notice of one of his concerts, printed in the "Avant-coureur," a leading Paris newspaper, of March 5, 1764. "This boy, who is only seven this month, is a true prodigy. He has all the talent and science of a mature musician. Not only does he give surprising performances of the works of the most celebrated masters in Europe, but he is also a composer. Guided by the inspiration of his genius he will improvise, for hours together, music which combines the most exquisite ideas with an exhaustive knowledge of harmony. Every musical connoisseur is lost in amazement at the child, who performs feats such as would do credit to an artist possessed of the experience of a long career." It was while Mozart was in Paris that his first compositions—four sonatas for the harpsichord—were published.

Warm as had been Mozart's welcome to the French

capital, it was surpassed by the enthusiasm of which he was the object a month or two later in London. Four days after his arrival in England he was invited with his father to Buckingham Palace, and had the honor of playing for three hours to the King and Queen. "We could not have supposed," wrote the father in naïve fashion, "from their friendly manner that they were the King and Queen of England. We have met with extraordinary kindness at every court, but what we have experienced here surpasses all the rest." Brilliant success attended the first London concert, and the boy's performances aroused an altogether unusual amount of interest. It was at this time that he made his first essay in the composition of symphonies for the orchestra—and this before he was nine years old! These symphonies, though naturally immature in style, give evidence of a remarkable sense of musical form and discrimination in the use of the various instruments.

A tour through Holland, France, and Switzerland brought the Mozarts home again to Salzburg. In spite of all his triumphs, Wolfgang happily had lost none of his naturalness of disposition. His delight at getting home was unbounded; and when he was not occupied with his music the little genius would romp with his sister and tease the family cat in the most childish manner.

He had still to win his spurs in Italy, the seal of Italian approval being at that time almost indispensable to a musician. Accordingly in the winter of 1769 father and son set off once more on their travels, bound this time for the south. Through the good offices of some admiring patrons Mozart's reputation

had preceded him, and concerts given at Milan, Verona, and Florence more than confirmed it. In Milan especially his performances created unwonted excitement, and at the age of fourteen he received a commission to write an opera to be produced in this city. In Rome, Naples—in short, wherever he went—he was received with the same enthusiasm.

One of his first visits in Rome was to the Sistine Chapel, in Passion Week, to hear the famous "Miserere" of Allegri, the music of which was so jealously guarded that the members of the choir were threatened with excommunication should they dare to copy or convey out of the chapel any portion of it. After a first hearing of the "Miserere," Mozart went home and wrote down the whole from memory; and after being present at a repetition of it on Good Friday was able to correct the few mistakes he had made. This marvelous *tour de force* attracted much attention, and luckily inspired more admiration than resentment at the Vatican. A month or two later he was granted an audience by the Pope, who decorated him with the cross of an order to which the composer Gluck had a short time before been admitted. "He has a splendid golden cross to wear," wrote his proud father, "and you can imagine how amused I am every time I hear him called 'Signor Cavaliere'!" For a while his new dignity tickled Wolfgang's fancy, and on the title-pages of his compositions he would write, half in fun, "Del Sign. Cavaliere W. A. Mozart"; but after a year we hear no more of it.

The following characteristic letter written from Rome by the "Sign. Cavaliere" to his sister, shows that success and honor had not changed him:

"I am well, thank Heaven, and fortunate in everything except this wretched pen, and send a thousand kisses to you and to our mother. I wish you were in Rome; you would like it. Papa says I am ridiculous, but that is nothing new! Here we have but one bed, and you can understand that when Papa is in it there is not much room left for me. I shall be glad when we get into new quarters. I have just finished drawing St. Peter with his keys and St. Paul with his sword. I have had the honor of kissing St. Peter's toe, but because I am too small to reach it, they had to lift me up. Your same old

WOLFGANG."

At the end of the year the travelers returned to Milan, and Mozart set to work upon an opera, "Mitridate." In a letter to his mother he writes: "I cannot work for long at a time, for my fingers ache with writing so much recitative. I beg Mamma to pray for me that it may go well with the opera." The work was finished in two months, and on its completion Leopold Mozart wrote to his wife: "As far as I can say without a father's partiality, it seems to me that Wolfgang has written the opera well, and with much spirit. The singers are good. It is now only a question of the orchestra and, finally, of the caprice of the audience. Consequently much depends on good luck, as in a lottery." The result was a striking success. At the first representation, which Mozart conducted, the audience were excited to great enthusiasm, which they expressed in shouts of "Evviva il Maestro! Evviva il Maestrino!" One of the arias was encored, a great and unusual compliment in those days.

The Italian tour was followed, after an interval of four years, by a third visit to Paris, on which occasion Leopold Mozart remained at Salzburg, while Wolfgang was accompanied by his mother. During the intervening years he had worked hard, the result being the composition of several symphonies, concertos, and masses, together with a variety of chamber music. His arrival in Paris was deferred by several circumstances. In the first place there were his successes en route at Munich and Mannheim, which he represented to his father as ostensible reasons for the delay; but there was a still more powerful agent at work in the shape of an ill-advised attachment which he had formed for the beautiful daughter of one of his father's penniless friends in the latter city. Leopold Mozart's letters to his son, when he realized the true state of affairs, were full of the greatest kindness as well as the soundest common sense; and it was not in vain that he pointed out to Wolfgang that to allow himself to be drawn away from his Parisian project would be seriously to endanger his chances of a brilliant public career. "Off with you to Paris," he writes, "and that soon; get the great folks on your side. 'Aut Cæsar aut nihil.' The mere thought of Paris should have preserved you from all fleeting fancies. From Paris the name and fame of a man of great talent goes through the whole world."

Mozart's reception in the French capital was at first a disappointment to him; but the altered attitude of the impressionable Parisians is easily explained if we reflect that, whereas on his previous visits it was as a charming boy and a marvelous prodigy that he came, he was now a young man of two-and-twenty, practi-



MOZART

cally unknown to Paris except by foreign reputation. Moreover, all Paris was at this time absorbed in the artistic duel in which the rival musicians Gluck and Piccinni were engaged.

Mozart's genius, however, soon found its level. After feeling his way with some lighter compositions, he induced Legros, the director of the best concerts in Paris, to produce his new symphony, that in D major. So unsatisfactory was the performance of it at rehearsal that Mozart had not the courage to appear among the audience on the night of the first public performance, but crept into the orchestra to be ready, if necessary, to take the instrument out of the hands of the first violin and lead the work himself. Happily, all went well, and the symphony was much applauded. "I went in my joy at once to the Palais Royal, ate an excellent ice, said my rosary—which I had promised to do—and went home," he wrote to his father. This symphony was soon afterward followed by another, with equally gratifying results. His happiness in Paris was brought to a mournful end by the death of his mother; and very soon afterward, when he was on his way back to Salzburg, he was confronted by another sorrow, this time that of bitter disappointment. At Mannheim he found his first love, from whom his heart had never wavered, entirely changed, and now as cold to him as she had been ardent before. She was at the height of a brilliant career as a singer, and success had spoiled her.

It was a sad home-coming, but Mozart had always his art to comfort him; and after a year of quiet work at Salzburg he received, to his great delight, a commission to write an opera for production at Munich.

The opera in question, "Idomeneo," was the starting-point of his career as a great German master; for, having come under the influence of Gluck's music, he here laid the foundation of an operatic school destined to play an important part in the revolutionizing of the lyric stage.

During the time he lived in Munich, finishing "Idomeneo" and superintending its rehearsal, he had some hard struggles with poverty. Like most artists, he possessed a strange inability to keep his money when he had made it, though—again like many artists, to their credit be it said—it was through his reckless generosity that he so constantly found himself straitened. Still he was not depressed. "I have only one small room," he writes from Munich, "and when my piano, table, bed and chest of drawers have been squeezed in, there is very little space left for me!"

The success of "Idomeneo" in 1781 was followed, a year later, by the production at Vienna of an opera, "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," which has not received the attention it deserves considering that high authorities—including Gluck and Weber—have considered it to contain much of Mozart's best and most characteristic work. At its first representation, in spite of the fact that its methods indicated a distinct departure from the familiar Italian models, it made a great impression, and several numbers were encored. On the Emperor's saying to Mozart on the following day, half in jest, "Too fine for our ears, my dear Mozart, and a great deal too many notes," the composer replied, "Exactly as many notes as are necessary, your Majesty."

The same year was marked by Mozart's marriage.

By a curious freak of fortune he married the sister of the disdainful beauty who had inspired his first passion. Her homelier attractions had at first stood no chance beside the brilliant charms of her elder sister, but eventually her sweetness of character won its way into Mozart's heart. Their short married life was very happy, in spite of the shifts to which the composer's chronic impecuniosity frequently reduced them. His concerts were too often artistic instead of financial successes, and then the shoe pinched. It was under the strain of anxieties of this description, mainly felt on his wife's behalf, and from the ceaseless energy of mind which seemed to be wearing out his body, that his health began to give way. The amount of work he crowded into the last eight years of his life would make it seem as though he had a presentiment that his time was to be short.

It was in Vienna, shortly after his marriage, that he first met Haydn, and entered upon that brief but devoted friendship which was to Haydn one of his chief pleasures. After looking through several of Mozart's compositions, Haydn took the composer's father apart, and said to him: "I tell you, on the word of an honest man, that I consider your son to be the greatest composer I have ever known. He has rare taste, and a most thorough knowledge of composition."

"Le Nozze di Figaro," the "greatest musical comedy" ever written—a true "dramma giocoso," as Rossini called it—was produced at Vienna on May 1, 1786. Its reception is described in the "Reminiscences" of Kelly, the singer, who performed in it. "Never was anything more complete," he says, "than the triumph of Mozart and his 'Nozze di Figaro.' . . . Even at the

final rehearsal, all present were roused to enthusiasm; and when Benucci came to the fine passage, 'Cherubino, alla vittoria, alla gloria militar!' which he gave with stentorian lungs, the effect was electric. The whole of the performers on the stage and those in the orchestra vociferated 'Bravo! Bravo Maestro! Viva, viva! Grande Mozart!' And Mozart? I shall never forget his little countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius; it is impossible to describe it, as it would be to paint sunbeams." Encores became so frequent that the Emperor had to forbid them; and on his saying that he believed that in this he had done the singers a service, Mozart replied, to the Emperor's amusement: "Do not believe it, your Majesty; they all like to have an encore. I, at least, can certainly say so, for my part."

"Don Giovanni" followed, in October, 1787; and "Die Zauberflöte" four years afterward, only six months before Mozart's death. His health was rapidly giving way—the result of combined anxiety and overwork—and, though he would never admit that he was ill, he became a prey to fits of the deepest melancholy. It was during this period of distress that he composed his two greatest symphonies—those in G minor and C major—of which Richard Wagner wrote that in them "he seemed to breathe into his instruments the passionate tones of the human voice . . . and thus raised the capacity of orchestral music for expressing the emotions to a height where it could represent the whole unsatisfied yearning of the heart."

In the summer of 1791 Mozart received a mysterious commission to compose a "Requiem," on condition that he made no attempt to discover for whom it was in-

tended. He accepted the task, but with an unconquerable presentiment that the "Requiem" would also be his own. The foreboding was only too true. He never lived to finish it; indeed he was actually at work on it when he was seized by the final attack of the illness which proved fatal to him. At one o'clock on the morning of December 5, 1791, he died.

Infinitely sad is the epilogue to his life. So poor was he at the last that his wife could not afford even the humblest ceremony of funeral; and though there were more than enough who, after his death, lamented the loss of so great a genius, none was found to provide him with the scant honor of a decent burial. So died Mozart, if not the greatest, the most brilliant musician the world has seen; and this man, who had been the friend of emperors and princes, and a prince himself in the realm of his art, was allowed to find his last resting-place in a pauper's grave in the churchyard of St. Marx at Vienna.

His widow, when she had recovered from the first shock of grief, went to visit the cemetery; but the grave-digger was unable to point out to her under which of the nameless mounds lay all that was mortal of the great Mozart.

II

Mozart is Mozart by virtue of the exquisite tenderness and charm of his nature, which breathes from every bar of his music. Never has a more delicate soul been cast upon the tender mercy of a cruel world. There is something in the childlike freshness of Mozart's nature, in his beautiful sympathy not only for

the nobler aspirations of humanity, but also for its weaknesses and foibles, which has a pathos that is beyond tears. That this man should have been buffeted through life by boors and hounded at last into a nameless grave is one of the tragedies of musical history.

Mozart's facility of composition was unequaled, and the amount of work that he got through during the thirty-six years of his life was prodigious. We must remember how much of his music was written when he was a boy—a boy of genius, it is true, but still of an age when nothing but clever reproduction of the ideas of others could be expected from him—and that another considerable fraction was produced to order, and to the order of a man whom he hated. This too may be conveniently neglected in summing up his life's work. There remains a body of work of such marvelous strength and beauty and exhibiting such varied gifts that the world is still in doubt as to whether Mozart is greatest in orchestral or chamber music, in sacred music or in opera. One thing is certain, that the composer of the six quartets dedicated to Haydn, the symphonies in E flat, G minor, and the "Jupiter," the "Requiem," "Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "Die Zauberflöte," whatever branch of music be under consideration, must stand in the very front rank of the world's musicians.

Mozart's position in the history of the quartet, and even more so in that of the symphony, is rather a curious one. He found the form perfected by Haydn; he took it and infused into it a power of thought and a vigor of expression that were far beyond Haydn's reach, and handed it back to his master, who profited so far by Mozart's achievements that, as regards his

symphonies at any rate, he now lives chiefly by the works that he produced under the influence of the younger man. Haydn's symphonies express, so far as they express anything, his honest, good-humored acceptance of life as it is, untinged by any complexity of thought or profundity of emotion.

Mozart first touched music with what we may briefly call the modern spirit. He made it the vehicle of direct emotional expression, not necessarily the expression of personal emotion, for his range of thought was so wide and his sympathies were so universal that he seems to be the spokesman of the world at large rather than to be lifting the veil from his own private feelings. It is impossible to hear, let us say, the G minor symphony without feeling that once for all instrumental music had been emancipated from its old-time condition of mere "Tafel-Musik," a pleasing concourse of sounds put together to aid the digestion of a dyspeptic nobleman. For better, for worse, it must henceforth rank with other art-forms as a means of expressing all that is highest and noblest in the soul of man.

We have spoken chiefly of Mozart's symphonies, but we would not have it thought that in his other orchestral works there are not treasures of beauty and grandeur, in fact it rarely happens that one of his minor works is revived without impressing its hearers with new wonder at the limitless range of the composer's genius. Recently his little "Maurerische Trauermusik," a piece written for the funeral of a brother freemason, has been repeatedly played in many cities.

In Mozart's chamber music the same emancipating influence is felt. He clothed the Haydnesque form

with new and marvelous raiment, not merely in his string quartets, but in the works written for novel combinations of instruments, such as the clarinet quintet, the quintet for wind and piano, and his many works for various groups of wind instruments. In the latter he enlarged the borders of chamber music in an extraordinary manner, his marvelous knowledge of the special quality of each instrument guiding him with unerring certainty. His works for wind instruments are totally different in style from those written for strings. There is something colossal, something almost superhuman (to take one instance) about his great serenade in C minor for hautboys, clarinets, horns, and bassoons. It moves with a deliberate solemnity that seems to belong to a different world from that of his works for strings with their quick play of checkered feeling. In Mozart's day the clarinet was a new instrument, but he divined its capabilities with inspired sagacity. No one has written for it as he has; but his mastery of orchestration has passed into a proverb, and though modern composers with their far more extended resources may call his scores slight, they dare not call them monotonous or ineffective.

From the modern point of view, Mozart's pianoforte works are not so interesting as much that he has left us, though their place in the history of music is none the less important. The development of technique has helped to shelve them, though pianists still say that, in spite of its apparent simplicity, a Mozart concerto is as severe a test of good playing as can be found. Still more have they been affected by the improvement in the manufacture of pianofortes. Mozart wrote for an instrument which, though bearing the



THE DEATHBED OF MOZART

From the Painting by O'Neil

same name, really belonged to a different world from that of our modern pianos. On a "concert grand" it is practically impossible to realize the delicate effects that Mozart had in view.

Mozart's sacred music, if viewed as a whole, must be relegated to a lower place in the catalogue of his works than perhaps any other branch of his composition. A great deal of it was written at Salzburg in compliance with the orders of the hated Archbishop, and it is not surprising that in this situation his heart was not in his work. It is in the sacred music of his later years that we find the true Mozart, in works like the "Requiem," the mass in C minor, which he left unfinished at his death, and which has recently been published with the missing movements supplied by adaptation from Mozart's other works, and, perhaps most beautiful of all, the exquisite little "Ave Verum," a work as pure and tender in inspiration as a motet by Palestrina. These are the works to which we must turn if we want to know what Mozart could do in the field of sacred music. In the "Requiem" Mozart measures himself against the great masters of an earlier generation, and comes gloriously from the encounter. His music has a breadth and dignity of style worthy of Bach or Handel, allied to a poignancy of expression that suggests a later age. Simple as are the means he employs compared with the elaborate resources of modern composers, such as Verdi and Gounod, his picture of the unearthly terrors of the Judgment Day remains unequaled in its thrilling intensity, while the human elements of the scene are treated with that tenderness and divine sympathy of which only such as he have the secret.

Great as Mozart proved himself in everything he touched, it is in his operas that he makes the surest appeal to modern hearers. No lapse of time nor change of fashion can dim the luster of these marvelous works. We find him first as a mature artist in "Idomeneo" (1781), and for the next ten years he gained steadily in range of vision and in power of expression, until his career culminated in "Die Zauberflöte." In Mozart's operatic career two influences work side by side, the Italian and the German. We find him in his childish days writing first an Italian operetta, "La Finta Semplice," for Salzburg, and then a German one, "Bastien und Bastienne," for Vienna. So having idealized Italian opera in "Idomeneo," and endowed it with a wealth of orchestral color and a richness of concerted music of which Italy had never dreamed, he turned to his native tongue, and in "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" practically laid the foundation upon which the imposing edifice of modern German opera has been constructed. In this work we find the first suggestion of what was one of Mozart's greatest gifts, his unequaled power of characterization. Mozart's characters live in their music like the creations of one of our great novelists. In music he reveals to us every thought as plainly as if we were reading a printed page.

If this is true of "Die Entführung," much more is it true of "Le Nozze di Figaro," in which Mozart's art exalted a tale of artificial and at times unpleasant intrigue into one of the great music dramas of the world. Here for the first time we find Mozart with his panoply complete. What a set of puppets the characters in "Figaro" are! Hardly one of them merits our af-

fection, certainly not our esteem. Yet the enchanter breathes life into them, and we follow the mazy entanglements of their plots and counterplots with a delight that never tires. If there is one quality more than another in which Mozart excels other composers, it is his power of characterization. Each one of his people stands out perfect and distinct, a type realized with infinite knowledge of humanity, and drawn with unfailing certainty of touch.

Mozart is never a caricaturist. It is in his sympathy with the faults and follies of human nature that the supreme charm of his personality lies. Behind the dancing puppets one sees the sad-eyed enchanter with his wan face and pitying smile. Greater even than "Figaro" is "Don Giovanni," for here the canvas is broader and the passions are nobler. The libretto of "Don Giovanni" is not dramatic in the usual theatrical sense, but for operatic purposes it has rarely been surpassed. It deals almost entirely with emotion, which music interprets so well, and hardly at all with incident, which music interprets so badly or at times cannot interpret at all. "Don Giovanni" ranges over the whole gamut of human feeling. From the buffoonery of Leporello to the supernatural terrors of the closing scene is a wide step, but Mozart's touch never falters. One can hardly say the characterization is more perfect than in "Figaro," but in "Don Giovanni" the contrasts are more striking and the master's brush takes a wider sweep. What, for instance, could be finer than his differentiation of the three women: Anna, the noble virgin, strong in the ardor of her passionate chastity; Elvira, the loving, trusting wife, with whom to know all is to pardon all; and Zerlina, an embodi-

ment of rustic coquetry? Never for a moment does Mozart lose his grip of the initial conception of his characters, though his inimitable art blends their different idiosyncrasies into a dramatic whole of perfect beauty. In "Così fan tutte" we are again in the world of "Figaro"; this gay and brilliant little work, after a period of unmerited neglect, is now on the way to regain the favor that it deserves.

In "Die Zauberflöte" Mozart produced what many distinguished persons, including Beethoven and Goethe, have pronounced to be his masterpiece. The libretto, which is a curious compound of fantastic imagination and buffoonery, is usually taken to be an allegorical presentment of the triumph of freemasonry. Undoubtedly the masonic element counts for a good deal, but behind this the discerning hearer will perceive the outlines of an allegory nobler in substance and loftier in scope, the ascent of the human soul, purified by trial, to the highest wisdom. Mozart's music is amazing in its many-colored beauty, and in the imaginative splendor by means of which it clothes scenes and situations of all kinds with a garment of romance.

"Die Zauberflöte" is in a sense a summing up of Mozart's genius. The range of thought is tremendous, and whatever the nature of the scene, Mozart paints it with unerring touch. The lighter parts of the opera are the very incarnation of irresponsible gaiety, and in the solemn scenes the composer rises to heights of sublimity. Over all the work hangs a mysterious atmosphere of poetical imagination, through which we discern figures walking, as it were, in a golden haze.

We know not if "Die Zauberflöte" has ever been compared to "The Tempest," but to us it seems that

the two crowning works of Mozart and Shakespeare have much in common. Not only is Sarastro a tolerably close counterpart of Prospero, while Tamino and Pamina may stand for Ferdinand and Miranda, but the attitude to life, if we may call it so, of the two works is curiously alike. Both deal with a tale of the most fantastic imagination, under cover of which the author wrestles with the profoundest problems of human existence. In both there is that breadth of view that comes from a mind risen above the petty troubles of earth, that serene wisdom born of ripe experience and a knowledge of good and evil, and that supreme mastery of craftsmanship to which only the greatest can attain. In each the master magician of his time bade farewell to the scene that his genius had enriched.

"Die Zauberflöte" fitly closed Mozart's career. What that career was, and what its value has been to the world at large, may best be summed up in Gounod's eloquent words: "O Mozart, divine Mozart! How little do they know thee who do not adore thee—thee, who art eternal truth, perfect beauty, inexhaustible charm, profound yet ever limpid, all humanity with the simplicity of a child—who hast felt everything and expressed everything in a musical language that has never been and never will be surpassed!"

III

We cannot better conclude this sketch than by making liberal use of a chapter on Mozart written by Herr C. F. Pohl of Vienna, in which, among many interesting observations, the following appear especially appropriate for citation here.

Mozart's handwriting was small, neat, and always the same, and when a thing was once written down he seldom made alterations. "He wrote music as other people write letters," said his wife, and this explains his apparently inexhaustible power of composing, although he always declared that he was not spared that labor and pains from which the highest genius is not exempt. His great works he prepared long beforehand; sitting up late at night, he would improvise for hours at the piano, and "these were the true hours of creation of his divine melodies." His thoughts were in fact always occupied with music. "You know," he wrote to his father, "that I am, so to speak, swallowed up in music, that I am busy with it all day long—speculating, studying, considering." But this very weighing and considering often prevented his working a thing out; a failing with which his methodical father reproached him: "If you will examine your conscience properly, you will find that you have postponed many a work for good and all." When necessary, however, he could compose with great rapidity, and without any preparation, improvising on paper, as it were. Even during the pauses between games of billiards or skittles he would be accumulating ideas, for his inner world was beyond the reach of any outer disturbance. During his wife's confinement he would spend his time between her bedside and his writing-table. When writing at night he would get his wife to tell him stories, and would laugh heartily.

He considered the first requisites for a pianist to be a quiet steady hand, the power of *singing* the melody, clearness and neatness in the ornaments, and of course the necessary technique. It was the combination of

virtuoso and composer which made his playing so attractive. His small well-shaped hands glided easily and gracefully over the keyboard, delighting the eye nearly as much as the ear. Clementi declared that he had never heard anybody play with so much mind and charm as Mozart. Dittersdorf expressed his admiration of the union of taste and science, in which he was corroborated by the Emperor Joseph. Haydn said with tears in his eyes, that as long as he lived he should never forget Mozart's playing, "it went to the heart." No one who was fortunate enough to hear him improvise ever forgot the impression. "To this hour, old as I am," said Rieder, "those harmonies, infinite and heavenly, ring in my ears, and I go to the grave fully convinced that there was but *one* Mozart." His biographer Niemetschek expresses himself in similar terms: "If I might have the fulfillment of one wish on earth, it would be to hear Mozart improvise once more on the piano; those who never heard him cannot have the faintest idea of what it was."

As a teacher (in Vienna) he was not in much request. He was neither methodical nor obsequious enough; it was only when personally attracted by talent, earnestness, and a desire to get on, that he taught willingly. Many people preferred to profit by his remarks in social intercourse, or took a few lessons merely to be able to call themselves his pupils.

He gave lessons in composition to a few ladies, a cousin of Abbé Stadler's among the number. The manuscript book he used with her is in the Imperial Library at Vienna, and is interesting as showing the cleverness with which, in the midst of jokes and playful remarks, he managed to keep his lady pupils to

their grammar. With more advanced pupils he, of course, acted differently. Thomas Attwood began by laying before him a book of his own compositions, and Mozart looked it through, criticising as he went, and with the words, "I should have done this so," rewrote whole passages, and in fact recomposed the book.

Mozart was short, but slim and well-proportioned; as a young man he was thin, which made his nose look large, but later in life he became stouter. His head was somewhat large in proportion to his body, and he had a profusion of fine hair, of which he was rather vain. He was always pale, and his face was a pleasant one, though not striking in any way. His eyes were well formed, and of a good size, with fine eyebrows and lashes, but as a rule they looked languid, and his gaze was restless and absent. He was very particular about his clothes, and wore a good deal of embroidery and jewelry; from his elegant appearance Clementi took him for one of the court chamberlains. On the whole he was perhaps insignificant-looking, but he did not like to be made aware of the fact, or to have his small stature commented upon. When playing the whole man became at once a different and a higher order of being. His countenance changed, his eye settled at once into a steady calm gaze, and every movement of his muscles conveyed the sentiment expressed in his playing.

He was fond of active exercise, which was the more necessary as he suffered materially in health from his habit of working far into the night. At one time he took a regular morning ride, but had to give it up, not being able to conquer his nervousness. It was replaced by billiards and skittles. He even had a billiard-

table in his own house. When no one else was there he would play with his wife, or even by himself. His favorite amusement of all, however, was dancing, for which Vienna afforded ample opportunities. He was particularly fond of masked balls, and had quite a talent for masquerading in character.

In society Mozart found amusement of the highest kind, and inspiration, as well as affection and true sympathy. One can quite understand that the refreshment of social intercourse was a real necessity after his hard brain-work. On such occasions he was full of fun, ready at a moment's notice to pour out a stream of doggerel rhymes or irresistibly droll remarks; in short, he was a frank open-hearted child, whom it was almost impossible to identify with Mozart the great artist. His brother-in-law Lange says that he was most full of fun during the time he was occupied with his great works.

His religious sentiments, more especially his views on death, are distinctly stated in a letter to his father at first hearing of his illness: "As death, strictly speaking, is the true end and aim of our lives, I have for the last two years made myself so well acquainted with this true, best friend of mankind, that his image no longer terrifies, but calms and consoles me. And I thank God for giving me the opportunity of learning to look upon death as the key which unlocks the gate of true bliss. I never lie down to rest without thinking that, young as I am, before the dawn of another day I may be no more; and yet nobody who knows me would call me morose or discontented. For this blessing I thank my Creator every day, and wish from my heart that I could share it with all my fellowmen."

Mozart has often been compared with other great men, Shakespeare, Goethe, Beethoven, Haydn, etc., but the truest parallel of all is that between him and Raphael. In the works of both we admire the same marvelous beauty and refinement, the same pure harmony and ideal truthfulness; we also recognize in the two men the same intense delight in creation, which made them regard each fresh work as a sacred task, and the same gratitude to their Maker for his divine gift of genius. The influence of each upon his art was immeasurable; as painting has but *one* Raphael, so music has but *one* Mozart.

BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

I

ONE day in the summer of 1787, when Mozart was busy with "Don Giovanni," which was to be produced at Prague in October, he was asked by a friend to hear a young pianist who had come to Vienna from Bonn in the hope of gaining a footing in what was then the German metropolis of music.

Mozart's time was precious, but he was too good-natured to refuse, and he went to his friend's house at the time appointed. The aspirant to musical fame was an ugly, shock-headed boy of seventeen, ill-dressed and awkward in manner. Mozart asked him to play something, which he did. The great man listened politely, waiting for the signs of genius which he had been told to expect, but he had much to think about just then, and his attention wandered. Frankly, he was bored, and probably a little annoyed with his friend for wasting his time in this way. The pianist stopped, and Mozart rose to go, probably saying a few words of kindly encouragement and advice. But the boy was not to be put off so. He knew that he had not done himself justice, and he was determined to show what was in him. He took his courage in both hands

and begged Mozart to give him a subject to improvise upon. Mozart, who was amiability itself, did as he was asked, and the boy began. This was a very different story. The boy was on his mettle, and all his shyness and nervousness disappeared as if by magic. He played like one inspired, and at the end of the *séance* Mozart, completely won, said to his friend: "Pay attention to him; he will make a noise in the world some day or other." Mozart never saw the boy again, but his prophecy came true, for the boy was Ludwig van Beethoven.

Beethoven was born December 16, 1770, at the lovely town of Bonn, on the Rhine, in Germany, where his father, Johann van Beethoven, was tenor singer in the Elector of Cologne's private chapel. Very little is known authentically of Beethoven's infant years, except that they were passed in the midst of poverty and misery, the result of the wretchedly small income which his father received, and of the drunken and dissolute habits to which he was a victim. However, this sad deficiency was to some extent counterbalanced by the kindness and liberality of Ludwig's grandfather, who was spared to behold the first three years of Ludwig's existence.

On his father's death, Johann had to confront matters, and consider how he could best make up the deficit it caused in his income. This, no doubt, led him to form a plan respecting Ludwig, who had already evinced a liking for the clavier. Urged by the poverty staring him in the face, now more deplorably than ever, and also by the glowing accounts of the successes of Mozart as an infant prodigy, Johann resolved to make a similar wonder of the infant Ludwig, and at

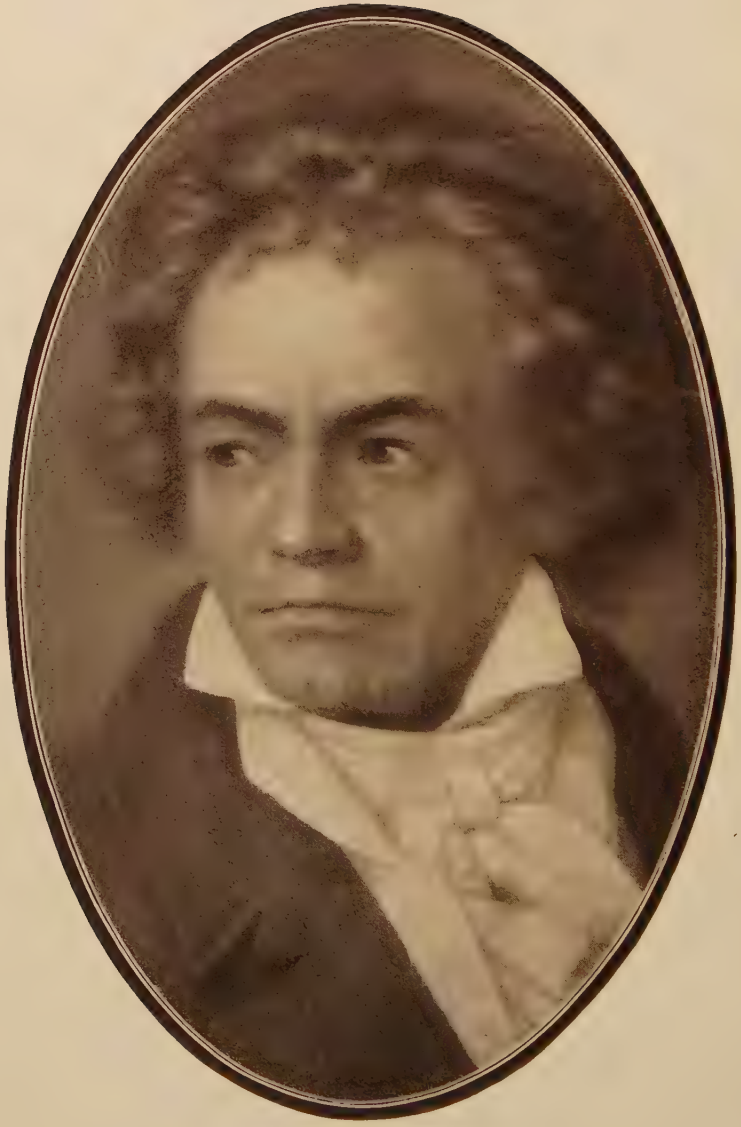
once commenced his musical education. At first the lessons were given in play, but were soon made sad and wearisome, for the poor child was kept at the piano day and night. Often, when his father and his companion Pfeiffer returned from the tavern, the child was called from bed to sit at the instrument till daybreak. Of course, with this kind of tuition, he made but little progress, and it soon became evident that if he was to become as wonderful as Mozart and others had been, a change must be made in the mode of instruction. Fortunately for the world, it took place in time to save the first sparks of genius in the baby boy from being extinguished by the inhuman Johann, and Ludwig was placed under the care of Pfeiffer, an excellent pianist. Under his kind instruction the child made wonderful and astonishing progress, and acquired a most passionate love for music. But when Ludwig was nine years old, Pfeiffer obtained an appointment as bandmaster in one of the Bavarian regiments, and was compelled to leave Bonn. Before doing so, however, he generously saw the young genius provided for and handed over to the court organist, Van den Eeden.

This change was of very short duration, for Eeden dying soon after, the boy once more changed hands, and this time fell into those of Eeden's successor, Christian Gottlob Neefe, a masterly musician, and at one time cantor at the Thomasschule at Leipzig. From what Beethoven afterward said, he does not appear to have been on very harmonious terms with Neefe; and he also relates that he did not profit by his instruction. Whether this be so or not, the master seems to have been proud enough of his pupil, for,

writing in "Cramer's Magazine" of that time, he says of him: "Louis van Beethoven, son of the court tenor singer of that name, a boy of eleven years old, possesses talent of great promise. He plays the piano with wonderful execution, and reads very well at sight —in short, he plays almost the whole of Sebastian Bach's 'Wohltemperirte Clavier,' which Herr Neefe has put into his hands. All who know this collection throughout all the keys (which might almost be called the *ne plus ultra*) will understand what this implies. Herr Neefe has also given him, so far as his other engagements will permit, some instruction in thorough-bass. He also exercises him in musical composition; and, to encourage him, has had his nine variations on a march published at Mannheim. This young genius deserves help, that he may travel. He will certainly be a second Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, if he continues as he has begun."

Under Neefe, Ludwig remained till 1787. During that time, though he was chiefly engaged in teaching, he filled the post of assistant organist at the church of St. Remigius—to which he was appointed by the Elector Max Franz, at a salary of a hundred thalers a year—and conducted the rehearsals of the Grossman Operatic Troupe, in the room of Neefe.

It was in this year, as we have seen, that Beethoven made his memorable visit to Vienna and won Mozart's prophetic commendation. Ludwig, however, did not remain long in Vienna, for, receiving information that his mother's health was in a very precarious state, he at once returned home, and arrived there only in time to see his loving parent breathe her last. She died July 17, 1787. This was a heavy blow to him. How



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his sensitive spirit received it is best told in his own words. Writing to a friend, Dr. Schaden, he says: "She was, indeed, a kind mother to me, and my best friend. Ah! who was happier than I when I could still utter the sweet name of mother, and it was heard? To whom can I now say it? Only to the silent form whom my imagination pictures to me."

Once more was our young genius surrounded with disheartenings which would have daunted the courage of many. Yet not so with him. He fearlessly and nobly looked matters in the face, and more earnestly than ever set about a task to which he never could, to the end of his days, inure himself—that of teaching. Still, teach he must to provide for his younger brothers and sisters, who were now dependent on him for support, for the father was getting more extravagant than ever in his habits. For years was Beethoven compelled to succumb to this distasteful alternative. But he had his reward; for it was in the pursuance of that which he disliked so much, that he made such acquaintances as Count Waldstein, the Archduke Rudolph, and the Breuning family. His associations with them were of the pleasantest kind, and especially with the Breunings, with whom he was as one of the family, and they were proud of him. It was at their house that he first became acquainted with that literature of his country which afterward he so much delighted to read, and to which he wedded some of his most splendid music. In this cheerful society he lived till 1792, with but little to break the everyday round of teaching.

In 1792 Beethoven again started for Vienna, which he had so suddenly quitted some five years previously,

and with a somewhat similar object as before. It was not, however, to see Mozart, but Haydn, and to receive the benefit of his instruction. Arrived in Vienna, Beethoven soon procured lodgings, and enrolled himself among the list of Haydn's pupils. Haydn instantly perceived his marvelous talent. Before long Beethoven felt dissatisfied with Haydn's instructions, and placed himself under the tuition of Albrechtsberger, for the purpose of thoroughly grounding himself in the mysteries of counterpoint and fugue.

It was during this time that the young maestro made the acquaintance of another among the great dilettanti who flocked to hear and to see him. This was Prince Karl Lichnowski, who, together with his wife, took such an interest in Ludwig that they wished him to reside with them at the Lichnowski palace. This kind offer Beethoven accepted, on condition that he should not be compelled to observe court etiquette, and for about ten years this sort of friendly intercourse continued. So great a favorite did he become, that he used afterward to say that "the Princess Christiane would have put a glass case over me, so that no evil might come nigh me." Many were the happy days passed in the Lichnowski palace, and many were the works penned within its walls. It was there that the three wonderful and unsurpassed trios for violin, violoncello, and pianoforte were first performed; also many of his quartets, the appealing Pathétique sonata, his first concerto in C major, for piano and orchestra, and other works. He remained a resident at the palace till 1795, when we find him appearing in public, as a virtuoso, for the first time. Hitherto he had confined his performances to palaces and private man-

sions. His fame, however, had spread so far and wide that the public *would* see him, and the curiosity of the Viennese was at length gratified on the occasion of his appearing at the "annual concert for the widows and orphans of musicians." From that time to the year 1827, when he died, he never quitted for more than a day or so the town in which he made his début.

Behold this colossal genius, but twenty-five years old, the greatest virtuoso of the day, and already overstepping the summit which others had reached as composers. He was now sought after by the highest and noblest in Vienna. What a contrast to the time when he came there to see Mozart!

But what is this cloud before him? Beethoven has forebodings of a fearful nature. His hearing occasionally fails him. Gradually the cloud creeps nearer and nearer, till, in 1800, his fears culminate—Beethoven is deaf! How heavy a burden was now laid upon him! Other misfortunes he had got over; how was he to shake off this heaviest of them all? Such thoughts as these must have passed through his mind. And what was his reply? "Resignation! what a miserable refuge, and yet the only one left for me." How keenly Beethoven felt his affliction will be best perceived by a few extracts from his letters. Writing to a friend, he says:

"If I had not read that man must not of his own free will end this life, I should long ago have done so by my own hands. . . . I may say that I pass my life wretchedly. For nearly two years I have avoided society, because I cannot shout 'I am deaf!' . . . I have often already cursed my existence."

In his "will," also, he refers to his fearful calamity.

"Thus, with a passionate, lively temperament, keenly susceptible to the charm of society, I was forced early to separate myself from men, and lead a solitary life. If at times I sought to break from my solitude, how harshly was I repulsed by the renewed consciousness of my affliction; and yet it was impossible for me to say to people, 'Speak louder—shout—I am deaf!' Nor could I proclaim an imperfection in that organ which in me should have been more perfect than in others. . . . What humiliation, when some one near me hears the note of a far-off flute, and I do not; or the distant shepherd's song, and I not."

Gradually was Beethoven compelled to give up his piano-playing and conducting, for he could not hear sufficiently what he or others played, and in 1802 he settled down to composition for the remainder of his life.

The first great work to which he directed his attention after his affliction, was the Third symphony, in E flat major, better known as the "Sinfonia Eroica."

After this massive work, Beethoven published a few piano sonatas, trios, and songs; then we come to that grand form of writing in which he has left us but a solitary specimen—"Fidelio." On November 20, 1805, this opera was given to the world, under the title of "Leonore, or Conjugal Affection," and met with quite an indifferent reception! After three representations, Beethoven withdrew it from the stage, but it was brought forward again in the following year, with one act completely taken out, and a new overture. Still his enemies at the theater would not have it, and succeeded in preventing its performance.

Thus it was put aside for some years. In 1814, with several alterations, and another overture in E—the most beautiful and vigorous of the four Leonore overtures—it was again presented, under the title of "Fidelio." Since then it has found a place on every stage in Europe, and Leonore, the heroine, has supplied the part in which some of the greatest singers have earned their laurels—Schroder-Devrient, Milder-Hauptmann, Pasta, Malibran, and, to come nearer the present day, Mme. Titiens.

Although this is the only opera Beethoven wrote, it is sufficient to prove his aptness for this branch of composition. The music to "Fidelio" stands supreme in the estimation of some critics, and it is to this alone that its success can be attributed; for, from a dramatic point of view, the opera possesses but little interest beyond that of the heroine Leonore.

This brings us to what some writers regard as the "matured period" of Beethoven's life, 1804-14; the period when his writings bear unmistakably the stamp of his individuality and genius, and to this period belongs a list of colossal works which cannot in this brief sketch be treated of singly. Among the most important are the music to Goethe's "Egmont"—alone sufficient to place its composer in the first rank, had he written nothing more—the Fourth symphony, in B flat major, and the Fifth, in C minor.

The Sixth symphony followed immediately after the Fifth. It is in F major, and may be better known by the title given to it by the composer himself—the "Pastoral." This symphony was followed by the mass in C, in which the composer made such a deviation from the path that Haydn and Mozart had trodden be-

fore him. It was first performed in 1810, at the palace of Prince Esterhazy, at Eisenstadt, where the Prince, his kapellmeister Hummel, and a host of artists and dilettanti were assembled to hear this new mass, so different from those of the Mozart school to which they were accustomed.

Five years elapsed between the "Pastoral" symphony and the Seventh, during which a long list of somewhat smaller works flowed without intermission from his prolific pen. These included sonatas, trios, and songs, the music to Kotzebue's "Ruins of Athens" and "King Stephen"; till, in 1813, the Seventh symphony in A major, which he dedicated to Count Fries, was given to the world. It was first performed—together with the "Battle of Vittoria," composed by Beethoven in honor of Wellington's victory—at a concert given for the benefit of Austrian and Bavarian soldiers wounded in the battle of Hanau. At this concert Beethoven himself wielded the baton, Schuppanzigh led the first violins, Spohr the seconds; Salieri marked the time for the cannonades and drums, while Hummel and Sivori occupied subordinate places. In a circular Beethoven afterward wrote concerning it, he says:

"It was a rare assemblage of distinguished artists, every one of whom was anxious to employ his talents for the benefit of the Fatherland; and without any thought of precedence or merit, they all took their places in the orchestra. The direction of the whole was intrusted to me, but only because the music was of my composition. If any one else had written it, I would as cheerfully have taken my place at the big drum; for we had no other motive but the serving of

our Fatherland and those who had sacrificed so much for us."

The next year (1814) brought with it "Der Glorreiche Augenblick," a cantata for voices and orchestra, composed at the request of the authorities of Vienna, upon the occasion of the great congress of kings and princes in that year. In recognition of his composition, Beethoven was presented with the freedom of the city of Vienna, and received also other marks of esteem from the gay throng of visitors who crowded the city.

But this joyous time came to an end, and Beethoven was doomed to have further burdens to bear. His brother Karl died, and left him his only child to support. Beethoven cheerfully undertook this charge, and the first thing he did was to place the boy out of the reach of his mother—the Queen of the Night, as he called her—who was considered by Beethoven an unfit person to train up the child. But this "the queen" would not submit to, and the result was that for four years a lawsuit was pending between her and the great maestro as to who should possess the boy.

Eventually, Beethoven gained the day, and at once sent his young relative to the university. But Karl was soon expelled; for the mother's character was rooted in him, and he had chosen to walk in the steps of his shiftless father. Yet after this, Beethoven got his ungrateful nephew admitted to a school where his coguardian was supervisor. It was, however, of little use. Karl went from bad to worse; till after attempting self-destruction, he was placed in an asylum.

During the years of the lawsuit, the composer pub-

lished and wrote but little. The Eighth symphony, however, made its appearance in 1817; but it is most probable that it was composed some time before it was published.

In the latter part of 1819 Beethoven sat himself down to the mass in D major, intended for the occasion of the installation of his friend the Archduke Rudolph as Archbishop of Olmutz, in 1821; but so engrossed did the composer become in this colossal work for solo voices and chorus, full orchestra and organ, that he did not complete it till two years had passed beyond the event it was intended to celebrate. By Beethoven it was regarded as his most successful effort. It was first performed on April 1, 1824.

The next and last great work with which Beethoven's name is associated is the Ninth symphony, better known, perhaps, as the "Choral symphony" (it employs voices), which the composer dedicated to Frederick William III of Prussia. It was first performed in Vienna, under the composer's own direction, and met with unprecedented success. Such was the delight of the vast concourse assembled to hear it, that at times their shouts of joy completely overwhelmed the orchestra and singers. But Beethoven could not hear this!

About this time, he received an intimation that his nephew was in a fit state to be restored to him; and accordingly, Beethoven made a journey to the asylum, and brought Karl away with him. From the asylum they went to the house of Johann van Beethoven, where they were to reside during the arrangements that were pending for Karl to join Baron Stutterheim's regiment. A few days of his brother's com-

pany proved sufficient for Beethoven. He could not put up with his taunts, and on a wet and miserably raw day in December, 1826, Beethoven, with his nephew, started for Vienna in an open conveyance, for his brother would not lend him his close one. This exposure to the cold and rain brought about an attack of inflammation of the lungs from which he never recovered.

On reaching his home at Vienna, he laid himself on the bed which he was never again to leave. His friend Dr. Wawruch was in constant attendance, and performed several operations, which gave Beethoven partial relief; but dropsy set in, and made his case more than ever precarious. Still, his naturally strong constitution enabled him to linger on till March in the next year, 1827. It then became evident that he could not long battle against his disease, which was fast gaining the mastery over him; and on the morning of the 24th his friend Schindler visited him, and found him with a distorted face, sinking, and unable to speak more than a few words. His bedside gathering, which included Hummel, Schindler, Herr Ferdinand Hiller, Stephan Breuning, and A. Hüttenbrenner, saw that he could bear up but little longer; and on the doctor arriving, they begged Beethoven that he would allow the holy sacrament to be administered to him, to which he calmly replied, "I will."

The pastor came, and the holy office was performed with the greatest solemnity. Beethoven then requested his friend Schindler not to forget to thank Herr Schott and the Philharmonic Society for the assistance they had rendered him during his illness; and in a few minutes afterward he lost all conscious-

ness. He continued gradually to sink, till, on the evening of the 26th, Nature sang her requiem over him. Amid a fearful storm of thunder and lightning, his spirit took its flight.

His remains were followed to their resting-place by over twenty-five thousand persons—kings, princes, poets, painters, artists, composers, and the public of Vienna—all anxious to pay their last tribute of respect. A simple stone was all that was deemed necessary to mark the spot where his ashes lie; but when time shall have swept that and all his associations away, his sublime music will still preserve his name in every home, and in every heart.

II

It is deplorably commonplace to speak of Beethoven as a colossus, but so in truth he is, standing with one foot on the old world of music and one on the new. His early works are essentially of the eighteenth century. Many of them might have been written by Haydn. His latest works are so modern that we have hardly got abreast of them yet. What Beethoven did for music obviously cannot be summed up in two words. His extension of the forms of music, his breaking of the fetters in which his predecessors loved to dance were enormously important, but perhaps more far-reaching still was his introduction of the personal element into music.

Before Beethoven's day men had pictured themselves in their music—no one can write music or anything else without doing so—but they did so unconsciously and we perceive them as in a glass darkly.

Beethoven mirrored his soul in music of set purpose. Music was to him just as much a means of expressing his feelings as poetry was to Shelley. Sometimes he has told us in words what he is writing about it, as in the Pastoral symphony, the "Adieux" sonata, and the "Canzone di ringraziamento" in the posthumous quartet in A minor, and then even the most stiff-necked critics of the classical school have to admit that he is writing programme music. But in the truest and best sense of the word all Beethoven's music, all at least that was written after he reached maturity, is programme music. All of it is a musical expression of ideas or feelings. As to what these ideas were people will differ. One man will read a symphony or a sonata in one way, and one in another, but read them we must, or if we cannot we call them obscure, as for generations the world did, and still does, in the case of the posthumous quartets.

Programme music is now a term of abuse in the mouths of many men, partly because of the excesses of modern composers, who in default of ideas of their own have been reduced to tell in music stories intrinsically incapable of musical expression. But when Beethoven in his "Eroica" paints for us his ideal hero in all the changing scenes of life, or when in the symphony in A he sings the praises of the dance, from the dance of the spheres when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy to the dance of happy peasants in the riotous joy of life, he is putting music to its noblest use, he is lifting music from being merely an agreeable entertainment, and using it for a noble ethical purpose, as Wordsworth used poetry and Watts used painting.

The value of Beethoven's music and of all good music is a moral value. Great musicians are great teachers and great educators, and it is only when we realize this, and can understand the lessons that they teach, that music begins to have that educational value of which we hear so much and know so little.

Beethoven's method of working was entirely different from that of Mozart. He had nothing of the latter's inspired facility. His method was painstaking and laborious. His sketch-books, some of which are preserved in the British Museum, show plainly the extraordinary amount of pains he took to elaborate his ideas. It was his habit to carry one of these always with him, and to jot down anything that occurred to him during his walks or meals. Then he would work at these ideas with the most minute care, writing and rewriting until the original idea took the shape that satisfied him. He hardly wrote a bar that was not submitted to this process of revision, while in some cases he would rewrite a passage, such as the great air "Komm' Hoffnung" in "Fidelio," some twenty times.

Another interesting fact is proved by these priceless sketch-books; namely, that it was his habit to work at three or four things at the same time, consecrating to each and all of them the same loving and conscientious care. A mind that worked in this way was bound to be slow in developing, and as a matter of fact it was not until he reached his thirtieth year that Beethoven really found himself. In his earlier works, among much that he inherited directly from Haydn and Mozart there are passages of thoroughly characteristic originality; his first two symphonies are

precious to students of his development, but it is not until we reach the period of the "Eroica" that we find Beethoven in possession of a style of mature individuality.

With that noble work he broke forever with the traditions of the past, and soared into realms unknown before. The story of its dedication is well known, but it is too characteristic to be omitted. The work was written as a tribute of admiration to Napoleon; it was finished in the spring of 1804, and the fair copy was inscribed with the words "Sinfonia grande Napoleon Bonaparte." Beethoven was thinking of sending it to Paris, when the news reached Vienna that Napoleon had assumed the title of emperor. Beethoven's idol was shattered; his hero, the savior of France, was an ambitious tyrant. In the passion of his disappointment he tore the title from his symphony and trampled it under foot. Later the symphony was rechristened an "Heroic Symphony to celebrate the memory of a great man." After the production of the "Eroica" Beethoven may be regarded as fully emancipated from the bondage of the eighteenth century.

Here Beethoven on his own showing has painted the portrait of a great man. The symphony is not, like Strauss's "Heldenleben," a connected story. Beethoven's respect for symphonic form was too great for him to compel it to subserve whatever programme he had in view. His symphony is a series of scenes and impressions, not necessarily connected but all illustrating one main idea. The opening movement with its heroic ardor, its noble enthusiasm, and its magnificent joy in life, is followed by the funeral

march, to which Beethoven referred when he said on receiving the news of Napoleon's death: "I have already written music for this event." In this noble movement he ushers his hero to his last rest with all the pomp and solemnity of which music is capable. What the scherzo signifies has been often debated. But whatever the scherzo may be, there is no doubt of what Beethoven means by the finale. Here the "eternal feminine" makes its appearance, and in the union of the masculine and feminine elements, wonderfully typified in the two subjects, he shows us the marriage of two minds, each exalted and ennobled by the other to heights of celestial beauty. Beethoven never surpassed the accents of divine purity in which this union of human souls is sung. We seem to have here a musical realization of that burning desire which in his own case was never to be fulfilled: "O that at the last I may find her who is destined to be mine, and who shall strengthen me in virtue!"

The Fourth and Fifth symphonies are far more immediately autobiographical than any of the others, for in them we have the tale of Beethoven's unhappy passion for the Countess Theresa. The Fourth is the pæan of joy and triumph sounded over their betrothal; the Fifth is a picture in brief of that stormy and passionate episode in Beethoven's career which wrung his heart and tried his manhood more profoundly than any of the troubles that darkened his life. Never did poet sing of his love in strains nobler and more heart-stirring than these.

The Fourth symphony is the gayest and brightest that Beethoven ever wrote. It is pleasant to think that even that much-enduring soul had its moments of

sunshine, and in such a moment was this symphony written. The slow movement is a love-song of profound and tender feeling, but the rest of the work is joyous and frolicsome, even rollicking in its humor. There is hardly a touch of the rough horse-play which characterizes the lighter movements in some of his later works, but the symphony—and particularly the finale—suggests irrepressible life and vigor, abundant health and high spirits. Rarely in after life was Beethoven to know this radiant mood of happiness.

Very different is the world into which we are plunged in the C minor symphony. Here all is storm and tempest, and the tide of passion sweeps along with resistless fury. Sir George Grove, in his most sympathetic and illuminating book upon Beethoven and his symphonies, has pointed out how strikingly the first movement is illustrated by a passage in the work entitled "Beethoven's unsterbliche Geliebte," which is an account of the relations between Beethoven and the Countess Theresa. Few of the contemporary descriptions of the composer that have come down to us give a more lifelike impression of his stormy and imperious nature, and we cannot forbear quoting some passages from it. The story, it should be explained, is told by the Countess Theresa herself.

"One stormy winter's day in 1794, while the snow stood deep in the streets of Vienna, Countess Theresa Brunswick, then a girl of fifteen, was waiting for Beethoven to come and give her her pianoforte lesson. Weather never stopped him, but when he appeared it was plain that as fierce a storm was raging in his soul as in the streets. He entered with hardly a movement of his head, and she saw that everything was wrong.

"'Practised sonata?' said he, without looking at her. His hair stood more upright than ever, his splendid eyes were half-closed, and his mouth—oh, how wicked it looked! She stammered a reply: 'Yes, I have practised it a great deal, but—' 'Let's see.' She sat down to the piano, and he took his stand behind her. The thought crossed her mind, 'If only I am lucky enough to play well!' But the notes swam before her eyes, and her hands trembled. She began hurriedly. Once or twice he said *'Tempo,'* but it made no difference, and she felt that he was getting more impatient as she became more helpless. At last she struck a wrong note. She knew it at once, and could have cried. But then the teacher himself struck a wrong note, which hurt his pupil both in body and mind. He struck—not the keys, but her hand, and that angrily and hard; strode like a madman to the door of the room, and from thence to the street-door, through which he went, banging it after him."

Such are the man and woman, and such are the scenes depicted in the Fifth symphony. No words of ours can make clearer the contrast between the first and second subjects of the opening movement, the one tremendous in its overbearing passion, the other meek, yearning, and tender. Beethoven has here painted himself and his beloved in colors that can never fade. Like the story of their love, the music whirls upon its tumultuous course, fierce and terrible, at times almost incoherent for all its strict form, rising and falling in waves of passion, yet with touches of ineffably pathetic tenderness—surely never was the tragedy of a man's love told in accents of such irresistible sincerity and force. But the course of their love, if it did not run

smooth, was not all storm and tempest. In the slow movement we have its calmer and more dignified side, when hope blessed the composer with visions of peace and happiness, here set forth in the form of variations upon a noble and beautiful melody such as only he could write. Between the composition of this movement and the next came the rupture of the engagement, and the final shattering of all Beethoven's dreams. In the scherzo, that embodiment of indescribable mystery and horror, he treads the valley of the shadow of death, relieved only by the grim and cynical humor that peeps out in the trio. But Beethoven was a man of heroic mold; he was not to be crushed by sorrows that would have driven a weaker man to destruction, and after a passage of unutterable weirdness, in which the pulse of life is at its lowest, he bursts forth into a magnificent song of triumph. God is still God, and the world is fair, he seems to say. For a moment the shadows of the scherzo gather again, but his manhood triumphs once more, and the symphony ends in the radiant splendor of a glorious day.

We hear a great deal nowadays of the educational value of music, and a very definite educational value it undoubtedly has. But its educational value depends entirely upon the manner in which we listen to it, and upon what it means to us. Viewed only as a clever and ingenious development of certain themes, we do not think that the C minor symphony will educate any one to a very serious extent, but viewed as a record of Beethoven's struggle with misery and despair, and of his ultimate victory, it will educate any one who is susceptible of education much more than the average

lecture or sermon. It would be impossible for any one in whom the moral sense was not completely dead to rise from hearing it without feeling that his faith in himself and in mankind was strengthened.

Very different is the Sixth symphony, the "Pastoral," a lovely picture of the sights and sounds of out-of-door life. Beethoven was a passionate lover of the country. His summers were always spent in one or other of the villages near Vienna, where he passed whole days in the open air, wandering in the fields or sitting in the fork of a tree, sketch-book in hand. In the Pastoral symphony his worship of nature is transmuted into music, but it is music that is something more than merely picturesque. As he said himself, he dealt with impression rather than with painting. It is the emotion engendered by nature rather than nature herself that he describes, and this reaches its highest point in the glorious song of thankfulness that succeeds the marvelously realistic picture of the storm.

Different as the Seventh and Eighth symphonies are in scope and general character, they are alike in giving us an insight into one feature of Beethoven's personality, which it is impossible to ignore if we wish to know what the man really was. While comparatively few of Beethoven's contemporaries seem to have realized the grandeur of his moral nature and the towering force of his intellect, all of them agree in recording the rougher and more uncouth traits of his character. Hundreds of stories have come down to us illustrating his boorish manners and his fondness for the broadest and most obvious form of joking. Perhaps he inherited a taste for intellectual horseplay from some remote Flemish ancestor, but at any

rate it must be admitted that if from one point of view he appears as the Michael Angelo of music, from another he is certainly its Teniers.

In the finales of both of these symphonies we find him in the guise of the latter. Here his love of riotous fun bursts forth in uncontrolled vivacity. Here he gives himself up whole-heartedly to a boisterous humor that can be paralleled in the works of no other great composer. His music teems with quaint surprises and whimsical tricks. It is the incarnation of practical joking, very different in character from the rippling merriment of the Fourth symphony, and though less engaging it is nevertheless profoundly interesting as a revelation of a curious corner of Beethoven's mind. In other ways the symphonies are utterly different, the Seventh being one of the most romantic of Beethoven's inspirations, while the Eighth is intimate and personal in character and conceived on a much smaller scale than its predecessor.

Wagner's description of the Seventh symphony as an apotheosis of the dance gives the key to its meaning, but we must take the word dance in its widest signification. In the majestic introduction we seem to be ascending a mighty staircase, and when the gates of the palace are flung open the scenes that pass before our eyes seem to embrace all earth and heaven in their scope. In the first movement the rhythm of the universe is set to music, from the ordered beauty of the rolling spheres of heaven to the voices of nature and the wild music that burdens every bough. The allegretto suggests the dim mysterious rites of some ancient religion, with strange processions in the shadow of rock-hewn temples; while in the scherzo

we are in the primeval forest with fauns and dryads, and in the finale with boisterous peasants in a rustic merrymaking.

The Eighth symphony, even to Sir George Grove, who disliked programmes, suggested a conscious piece of autobiography. He calls it the picture of a day in the composer's life. Such it may well be. It is a *genre* picture of the Dutch school, curiously indoor in feeling compared with most of Beethoven's works, and elaborated with the most delicate nicety of detail. Beethoven's peculiar affection for this work, which was little understood by his contemporaries, suggests its strongly personal nature, and in it we seem to come closer to Beethoven the man than in almost anything that he has left us.

In the Choral symphony we are in a world far removed from the intimate subjectivity of the symphony in F. Before that last and greatest of his symphonies was written the clouds had gathered heavily over Beethoven's head. His deafness isolated him entirely from the world of men. He was poor and ill-cared for, neglected if not actually deserted by the friends whom his suspicions had estranged. Bitterest of all was the grief caused by the behavior of his scoundrelly nephew, who repaid the more than paternal love lavished upon him by his uncle with the blackest ingratitude and deceit. Yet from this abyss of sorrow arose the voice that was to sing for all time the song of human joy.

The Choral symphony is in one sense the easiest and in another the most difficult of Beethoven's works to grasp. By using some stanzas of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" in the finale, he makes plain what is the general

aim of the work. It is the quest of the human soul for joy, which in this marvelous and unequaled finale finds its goal. But what the various stages of that quest are, what Beethoven intended by the first three movements of the work, is a question that is not yet satisfactorily settled. It is this doubt, this difficulty that has earned for the Choral symphony, as for certain others of his later works, the title of obscure. So long as the hearer feels that the music to which he listens has a definite meaning, which he fails to grasp, so long will he have that sense of baffled endeavor which will not be dismissed by all the assurances of programme-writers that he should regard music simply as music, and not to trouble to look behind the mere notes of the work for the secret of the composer's inspiration. Wagner once wrote a programme for the Ninth symphony, illustrated by numerous quotations from Goethe, of which the gist is that the first movement expresses the titanic struggle of the soul, athirst for joy, against the veto of that hostile power which rears itself between us and earthly happiness; the second a feverish flight from old ideals to a new and unknown bliss; the third a memory of purest happiness from early days. In the last movement, in a series of variations on a tune of unsurpassable nobility and beauty, Beethoven gives us his conception of joy in all its manifestations, thus crowning his career as a composer with a sublime picture of the possibilities of human nature.

The personality of Beethoven is revealed no less clearly in his sonatas and quartets, some would say even more clearly than in his more elaborate orchestral works. In the pianoforte sonatas particularly,

we seem to come almost nearer to the composer than in anything that he wrote, and there are certain movements in listening to which one can almost fancy that one is hearing with the ear of faith one of those marvelous improvisations in which the composer poured forth his soul in music, oblivious of all save the passionate emotions that burned within him.

To describe the marvelous series of his chamber works and to record the impressions which they produce would take a volume in itself, and we dare not linger over the too fascinating task. Yet we will venture to say something about one of them—the Kreutzer sonata—not because it is one of the most famous things that Beethoven ever wrote, but because it has been the subject of most unsympathetic and unjust criticism in Tolstoi's celebrated novel, called by its name. If it were necessary to prove that Tolstoi is totally without the power of appreciating music, a reference to his "Kreutzer Sonata" would be quite enough. Surely the fact that he speaks of Beethoven's inspired work as sensual, and as having been written to arouse sensual feelings, brands Tolstoi forever as a Philistine of the Philistines. No man's music is freer from the taint of sensuality than Beethoven's, and no work of his moves in an atmosphere of more radiant purity than the Kreutzer sonata. If we may venture to propose a reading in mere words of that incomparable masterpiece, we would term it the story of the adventures of a soul. In the first movement we seem to see the soul of man, a newly arrived guest moving about in a world not realized. Confronted by the glitter and splendor of life she halts, timid and uncertain. How self-satisfied and complacent is the

theme that typifies the marshaled orderliness of modern society! "See my riches, my power," it seems to say; "how compact is my organization, how firm my foundations; there is no joint in my armor, I am perfect and complete." But the soul asks timidly, "Is this all? Has life no more to give?" and to all the boasts of the triumphant colossus she still replies, "Is this all?" In the next movement the soul turns to Art—Art in her myriad phases, radiant in beauty, gleaming with the thousand hues of the palette of romance. The soul wanders through scene after scene of ever-changing delight, each one more enchanting than the last. But still satisfaction comes not. In the last movement comes the answer to her often-repeated question. Nature rises before her like a tree springing from the soil, throwing aloft a thousand arms and rushing to the sun. Rapture crowds upon rapture, climax is hurled upon climax. The horizon widens, the air grows purer, till in the end the mighty symbol of growth and strength and purity covers the heavens and fills the earth.

The soul of Beethoven is mirrored no less clearly in his choral and dramatic works than in those for instruments alone. In all that he wrote, in "Fidelio" and the "Missa Solemnis" as much as in his symphonies and sonatas, we feel the man's heart beating behind his music more unmistakably than in the works of any other composer. In the "Missa Solemnis" mass Beethoven put into music his deepest feelings on religion, which were all the more profound and sincere because they had soared beyond the world of dogma. In the "Credo" he set the words of the Catholic creed, but there is nothing Catholic in his

music. Behind the mere words we seem to see that mighty symbol of growth and strength and purity and death, trammeled by no priestly doctrines or worn-out formulas. The tremendous accents of the "Credo," in their veiled and mysterious majesty, recall very strikingly that curious confession of faith, if so it can be called, which Beethoven copied out himself and kept constantly before him:

> I am that which is.
> I am all that is, that was, and that shall be.
> No mortal man hath lifted my veil.
> He is alone by Himself, and to Him alone do all things owe their being.

Beethoven's faith was one that, as the poet sings, "had center everywhere, nor cared to fix itself to form." In the "Sanctus," no less than in the "Credo," we feel the grandeur of the religious instinct that is here clothed in music. There is very little Christian feeling in that awful vision of Deity. It recalls rather some vast image of Buddha, tremendous in its eternal tranquillity, lifting its marble forehead far above the clouds of warring sects and systems. The mass is throughout, like all Beethoven's music, curiously personal in tone. It is no world-hymn of prayer and praise, like Bach's mass in B minor. It is the voice of one man, the record of a personality, molded in undying bronze. It is not the greater music for that, but as a human document it stands alone among the many famous settings of the Roman service. This in fact sums up Beethoven's musical legacy to the world. He made music definitely a vehicle of personal emotion—not that the great men who had gone before him had not written themselves, their thoughts, feel-

ings and aspirations, large upon their works. They had done so, but as it were unconsciously. With Beethoven music took its stand, as a means of personal expression, by the side of painting and poetry. It is scarcely too much to say of him, so considered, that he found music a science and left it an art.

III

The following description of Beethoven, with its illustration of certain of his personal traits, is taken from the writings of Sir George Grove.

He was below the middle height—not more than five feet five inches; but broad across the shoulders and very firmly built—"the image of strength." His hands were much covered with hair, the fingers strong and short (he could barely span a tenth), and the tips broad, as if pressed out with long practising from early youth. He was very particular as to the mode of holding the hands and placing the fingers, in which he was a follower of Emanuel Bach, whose "Method" he employed in his earlier days. In extempore playing he used the pedal far more than one would expect from his published sonatas, and this made his quick playing confused, but in adagios he played with divine clearness and expression.

His attitude at the piano was perfectly quiet and dignified, with no approach to grimace, except to bend down a little toward the keys as his deafness increased. This is remarkable, because as a conductor his motions were most extravagant. At a pianissimo he would crouch down so as to be hidden by the desk, and then

as the crescendo increased, would gradually rise, beating all the time, until at the fortissimo he would spring into the air with his arms extended as if wishing to float on the clouds. When, as was sometimes the case after he became deaf, he lost his place, and these motions did not coincide with the music, the effect was very unfortunate, though not so unfortunate as it would have been had he himself been aware of the mistake.

In the orchestra, as at the piano, he was urgent in demanding expression, exact attention to piano and forte, and the slightest shades of nuance, and to tempo rubato. Generally speaking, he was extremely courteous to the band, though to this rule there were now and then exceptions. Though so easily made angry, his pains as a teacher must have been great. "Unnaturally patient," says one pupil, "he would have a passage repeated a dozen times till it was to his mind; "infinitely strict in the smallest detail," says another, "until the right rendering was obtained." "Comparatively careless as to the right notes being played, but angry at once at any failure in expression or nuance, or in apprehension of the character of the piece; saying that the first might be an accident, but that the other showed want of knowledge, or feeling, or attention." What his practice was as to remuneration does not appear, but it is certain that in some cases he would accept no pay from his pupils.

His simplicity and absence of mind were now and then oddly shown. He could not be brought to understand why his standing in his nightshirt at the open window should attract notice, and asked with perfect simplicity "what those boys were hooting at." At

Penzing in 1823 he shaved at his window in full view, and when the people collected to see him, changed his lodging rather than forsake the practice. Like Newton he was unconscious that he had not dined, and urged on the waiter payment for a meal which he had neither ordered nor eaten. He forgot that he was the owner of a horse until recalled to the fact by a long bill for its keep. In fact he was not made for practical life; never could play at cards or dance, dropped everything that he took into his hands, and overthrew the ink into the piano. He cut himself horribly in shaving. "A disorderly creature" was his own description, and "an addlepate" that of his doctor, who wisely added the saving clause "though he may still be the greatest genius in the world."

His ordinary handwriting was terrible, and supplied him with many a joke. "Yesterday I took a letter myself to the post-office, and was asked where it was meant to go to. From which I see that my writing is as often misunderstood as I am myself." It was the same twenty years before—"this cursed writing that I cannot alter." Much of his difficulty probably arose from want of pens, which he often begs from Zmeskall and Breuning; for some of his manuscripts are as clear and flowing as those of Mozart, and there is a truly noble character in the writing of some of his letters.

John Russell, a traveler in Germany, presents a vivid picture of Beethoven at about the age of fifty, and with an extract from that writer's account we close our sketch of "the greatest master of the classical school."

"I have heard him play, but to bring him so far re-

quired some management, so great is his horror of being anything like exhibited. Had he been plainly asked to do the company that favor, he would have flatly refused; he had to be cheated into it. Every person left the room except Beethoven and the master of the house. . . . The gentleman, as if by chance, struck the keys of the open piano beside which they were sitting, gradually began to run over one of Beethoven's own compositions, made a thousand errors, and speedily blundered one passage so thoroughly that the composer condescended to stretch out his hand and put him right. It was enough; the hand was on the piano; his companion immediately left him, on some pretext, and joined the rest of the company, who, in the next room, from which they could see and hear everything, were patiently waiting the issue of this tiresome conjuration.

"Beethoven, left alone, seated himself at the piano. At first he only struck now and then a few hurried and interrupted notes, as if afraid of being detected in a crime; but gradually he forgot everything else, and ran on during half an hour in a phantasy, in a style extremely varied, and marked, above all, by the most abrupt transitions. The amateurs were enraptured; to the uninitiated it was more interesting to observe how the music of the man's soul passed over his countenance. He seems to feel the bold, the commanding, and the impetuous, more than what is soothing or gentle. The muscles of the face swell, and its veins start out; the wild eyes roll doubly wild; the mouth quivers, and Beethoven looks like a wizard overpowered by the demons whom he himself has called up."

WEBER

(1786-1826)



KARL MARIA VON WEBER

I

THE life of Karl Maria von Weber falls easily into two divisions—the first represented by the period in which, instigated partly by the extravagancies and vagaries of an unprincipled father, and partly by an inherited carelessness of disposition, the composer was living a nonchalant life in the easy-mannered courts of Southern Germany; the second, dating from his twenty-fifth year, being the time of the development of his individuality and of his genius.

His father, Franz Anton Weber, was originally in the army, from which he had retired wounded and entered the civil service. He knew nothing of finance and little of law, but his position enabled him to secure an appointment as financial councilor and district judge to the Elector of Cologne. He was a nobleman, and played the violin exquisitely, qualities which at that time sufficed to compensate for the neglect of his duties. When the Elector died, his successor had no fancy for this extraordinary judge and councilor, most of whose time was spent behind the scenes at the Opera House, and dismissed him with a small pension. In the course of years of struggle, now as impresario of a traveling operatic company, now fulfilling the duties of kapellmeister at

various small courts, Franz Weber squandered away all that was left of the fortune of his wife, whom want and anxiety soon brought to her deathbed. In 1785, being now fifty years of age, he married a pretty and delicate girl of sixteen, who at Eutin, Germany, on December 18 of the next year gave birth to a weakly infant suffering from a disease of the hip which resulted in incurable lameness. This child was Karl Maria Weber, the future composer of "Euryanthe" and "Der Freischütz."

In common with a host of other musical children, both then and since, Weber suffered indirectly in consequence of the brilliant career of the boy Mozart. His father was determined to have a musical prodigy in the family, and as poor little Karl showed an aptitude which none of his brothers had possessed, he was doomed to singing-lessons and lessons on the piano almost before he could talk. His father resumed his wanderings at the head of an operatic troupe, taking his delicate wife and child with him. Injurious as it must have been to his health, it must be admitted that the mode of his early life proved of service to the boy in many ways. In the first place, his father was wise enough, although insisting strenuously upon the paramount importance of music, not to neglect the other branches of education; and moreover, while he acquired a certain self-reliance from this roving mode of life, early intimacy with the stage gave him a knowledge of theatrical effect of the greatest value to one destined to become a composer of dramatic music.

His mother died before he was twelve years old, and he was thus entirely given over to the influence



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of an unscrupulous father whose chief merit was that, in his way, he was fond of his son and gave him a thoroughly good musical education. At the same time this was largely neutralized by his forcing the boy to write music of all kinds at an age when his talents were immature.

Still, more than one musician of influence was attracted by his exceptional abilities; among others he secured the patronage of the Abbé Vogler, a Viennese composer—a musical charlatan, perhaps, but a man of keen insight. To his influence Weber owed his appointment, in his seventeenth year, as conductor of the opera at Breslau. The young enthusiast managed with great spirit to overcome the difficulties of his position, that of a lad in his teens set as director over the heads of men two or three times his age; but his strict discipline made him many enemies, whose malevolent tactics compelled him after two years to throw up his post. It was about this time (1807) that he wrote his first compositions of importance, the two symphonies in C.

In his twenty-first year Weber was suddenly transferred from solitary insignificance into the midst of a brilliant and dissipated court. At the instance of one of his patrons he was made secretary to the Duke Louis, brother of the King of Würtemburg. He was expected entirely to regulate the Duke's private affairs, and to act as mediator between him and the King when necessary, which was often. His Majesty, whose temper was none of the sweetest, grew to hate this persistent secretary, who in his turn smarted under the indignities heaped upon him by the King. On one occasion, as Weber was leaving the royal

presence after a stormy interview in which the composer had been more than usually insulted, he perpetrated a practical joke which might have resulted in very serious consequences. Limping angrily through the anteroom adjoining the apartments where he had left the King fuming, he was accosted by an ill-favored dame, who inquired where she could find the royal washerwoman. "There!" cried the exasperated Weber, pointing to the door of the King's private room. The old lady unsuspectingly entered, and was met with a violent torrent of abuse from the King, and it was with difficulty that she could stammer out an explanation of her intrusion. The King at once guessed who was responsible for the trick, and ordered Weber to be thrown into prison. The Duke's intercession procured his release, but the King's animosity was relentless in seeking an opportunity for revenge.

This was not long in coming. Weber discovered that his father had for some time been misappropriating money which the Duke had intrusted to his secretary to pay off a mortgage on his estates. To shield his father, Weber took all the blame upon himself. After a mock trial, at which the King presided, he was sentenced to exile; and so in February, 1810, father and son were ignominiously conducted to the frontier by the police. They took refuge at Mannheim, a city in which Weber could hope to devote himself entirely to his art.

The elder Weber lived for two years longer; and nothing does more credit to his son's disposition than the tender care with which he surrounded this father, who had been the cause of endless trials and troubles borne without a reproach. On hearing of his father's

death, he wrote in his diary: "He fell asleep tranquilly, it is said. May God grant him above that peace which he had not below! It is beyond measure painful to me that I could do no more to procure his happiness. May God bless him for all the great love he bore me, which I did not deserve, and for the education he bestowed on me."

Weber's artistic career may be said to have begun on the day in 1810 when he settled in Mannheim. The example of his friend Meyerbeer—who, though not yet twenty, was already one of the first pianists of his day—stimulated him to higher flights in composition; and before the year was out he had produced his first pianoforte concerto, six sonatas for piano and violin, and several songs. In the same year, too, the idea of "Der Freischütz" had its birth. Weber happened, when in company with a young poet friend, to come across a new book of "Gespenster Geschichten" (Ghost Stories) by Apel, one of the tales in which, entitled "Der Freischütz," so struck the fancy of both as an ideal subject for romantic opera that they spent the greater part of the night in sketching out the plan of a libretto. Weber's friend was very anxious to undertake the writing of this, but press of work prevented him, and the task was set aside, as it proved, for ten years—a lucky accident, for the composition of the opera was thus deferred until Weber's powers had reached their fullest development.

For the next four years Weber was a wanderer. His activity was untiring. Concerts were given in almost all the principal towns of Germany, and at the same time he worked hard at composition, producing some of the most successful of his orchestral works.

He visited Prague, Leipzig, Dresden, Berlin—where his first important attempt at opera, "Silvana," was performed with some success—Weimar, Gotha, Vienna, and eventually in 1814 returned to Berlin.

At this time patriotic feeling ran very high among the Germans. Paris had fallen, the dreaded French invader was repulsed, and Napoleon exiled to Elba. Men would listen to no songs but those which told of war and the heroic deeds of German patriots. Among the vast number of such poems the finest and the most popular were those given to the world by Theodor Körner under the title of "Lyre and Sword." Weber procured these, read and re-read them, and wedded them to music so appropriate and so inspiring that they became at once the national songs of the day, raising their composer's popularity to an unprecedented height.

This visit to Berlin was paid during a leave of absence from Weber's duties as conductor at the Prague opera, where he was endeavoring to overcome the prejudice of the public with regard to German, as opposed to Italian, opera. A taste vitiated by the music of a degenerate Italian school could not be expected at once to appreciate the beauties of this newer and higher form of the art; still it must have been a cruel disappointment to Weber that a faultless performance of Beethoven's "Fidelio," upon which he had spent infinite pains, should be received with complete coldness. "I brought out on the 26th," he wrote to a friend, "Beethoven's 'Fidelio,' which went splendidly. The music is indeed full of beautiful things, but they don't understand it; it is enough to make one frantic. Punch and Judy would suit them better!"

A fresh access of popularity came to him in Prague as a consequence of the performance of his great patriotic cantata, "Kampf und Sieg," in 1815; but Weber felt that he was justified in seeking for a position more worthy of his fame, and in the course of the following year sent in his resignation as kapellmeister. By good fortune the corresponding post in the opera at Dresden fell vacant just at this time. The director of the Opera House was very anxious to establish German opera there in place of what had usually occupied the boards, and in Weber he found the very man to carry out such a plan. The King of Saxony, who owed his position entirely to Napoleon and was a declared ally of the French, cherished no kindly feelings toward his neighbors the Prussians, and was thoroughly opposed to this German operatic project. His objections were, however, overcome, and in 1816 Weber accepted the important post that was offered to him. In the next year he was married to Caroline Brandt, a famous singer, the modesty and innocence of whose character had acted as a charm in exorcising the effect of a previous regrettable entanglement of Weber's. The young couple, whose happiness seemed unclouded, took up their abode in Dresden, where they soon became universally popular.

It was in Dresden that Weber made the acquaintance of Johann Friedrich Kind, whose literary ability and intimate knowledge of the stage strongly recommended him to Weber as a collaborator. In casting about for an operatic subject, the composer came upon the forgotten sketch of "Der Freischütz." Kind was delighted with the story, and in two months delivered over to Weber a complete libretto, which elicited a

ready response from the musician. From this time until the summer of 1820 the composition of this opera was Weber's chief thought.

Happy as his prospect at first appeared, Weber before long found himself assailed on all sides by covert attacks and slights. The source of these was the King's prime minister, who had taken a strong dislike to Weber and lost no opportunity of increasing the King's rancor against this upholder of German opera, this composer of such emphatically German songs as those from "Lyre and Sword." But, in face of the marked advance in completeness and brilliancy shown by the performances at the Opera House, the King was obliged to defer to public sentiment, and to confirm Weber's appointment for life. By this means Caroline Weber was enabled to fulfill her husband's wish and leave the stage, to devote all her sweetness to the task of creating happiness in her home. Against this had to be set the fact that the influence of Weber's friends at court was waning, and that anonymous insults from his enemies and marked slights from the King were producing their effect upon the composer's delicate constitution.

A distinguished pupil of Weber's gives an account of his first meeting with him about this time. "Ascending the by-no-means-easy staircase which led to his modest home on the third story of a house in the Alt-Markt, I found him," he says, "sitting at his desk occupied with the pianoforte arrangement of his 'Freischütz.' The dire disease which all too soon was to carry him off had made its mark on his noble features; the projecting cheek-bones, the general emaciation, told their sad tale; but in his mighty fore-

head, fringed by a few straggling locks, in the sweet expression of his mouth, in the very tone of his weak but melodious voice, there was a magic power which irresistibly attracted all who approached him."

At last arrived the memorable evening of the production of "Der Freischütz," and with it the climax of Weber's life. The day chosen, June 18, 1821, was the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. After the dress rehearsal on the preceding day many of Weber's friends were full of gloomy anticipations; for, though the singers and orchestra had been at their best, some of the most important accessories had been in anything but good working order. It was feared, moreover, that the music might prove to be over the heads of the audience. Weber was perhaps the only one who was confident and undisturbed. He knew the value of his work, and he judged rightly. At the performance everything went smoothly, and the result was a triumph so brilliant as to exceed his fondest hopes.

Two years later he achieved what appeared to be an even greater success with his opera "Euryanthe"; but it was not long before the venomous attacks of his enemies again began to harass him. Too generous to retaliate in kind, Weber, with his sensitive nature, suffered terribly under the injustice and rancor of which he was the mark—the more so as some of those whom he had most benefited, including the composer Spohr, were among the most bitter against him.

In the following year Weber was gratified by receiving from Charles Kemble, the lessee of Covent Garden Theater, an invitation to write the music for an opera, which should have an English libretto, to be produced at that house. The great popularity in

England of "Der Freischütz" (which was given in three London theaters simultaneously) and the composer's strong sympathy with the English inclined him to accept the proposal. The remuneration offered him would be most acceptable, as nearly all his paltry salary and all the profits from his previous operas had been swallowed up by his honorable determination to discharge the debts his father had left behind him at his death.

In his doubt as to whether his impaired health would now stand the strain of the effort, he consulted his doctor, who told him that his only chance of five or six years more of life lay in absolute cessation from work and a long visit to the South. Failing this, a few months might be all that was left to him. Recognizing the terrible position in which his death would leave his wife and children were he not able to make some provision for them, he resolutely answered the doctor: "As God will. From what you say, I cannot hope to secure a future for my wife and family by dragging on a useless life for a few years. In England I may expect a return for my labors which will leave them in possession of means that I could not otherwise procure them; thus it is better I should accept the task." He bound the doctor to the strictest secrecy as to what had passed between them, and at once set to work to study the English language, and make himself master of the libretto of the new opera, the subject of which was "Oberon."

By the beginning of 1826 the opera was ready. In spite of the consuming pain of which he was perpetually the victim, Weber was able to produce a work of great delicacy and beauty, under the music of

which there seems to lie a vein of happiness that is almost incomprehensible. Notwithstanding his friends' remonstrances he was determined to go to London in time to superintend the rehearsals of the opera. His answer to those who would dissuade him was always the same: "It is all one! Whether I go or remain, in one year I am a dead man. But if I go, my children will have bread when their father dies; if I remain, they will starve."

This, his last triumph, was undisputed and complete. "Oberon" created at its first performance at Covent Garden, on April 12, 1826, an almost unprecedented effect. Weber, elated, though physically prostrated by excitement, wrote after the performance to his wife: "By God's grace and help I have to-night had such a perfect success as perhaps never before. It is quite impossible to describe the dazzling and touching effect of such a complete and cloudless triumph. God alone be praised for it!"

In two months from this time Weber was dead. Once the excitement of the "Oberon" production had passed over, he was seized with a passionate yearning for home. "I am a shattered machine," he said to his friends; "would to God it could be held together till I might once more embrace my Lina and my boys!" Sustained by his purpose of procuring provision for the future of his dear ones, he still persisted in attempting to appear at public performances, and to give concerts, until this was imperatively forbidden by the doctors. Then, although he knew the desperate nature of his case, he became happier at the thought that he was free to leave England and might perhaps live long enough to see his wife again. His letters to her

were full of a tender playfulness at the thought; everything was duly arranged, and the 6th of June had been fixed for his start on his homeward journey. On the morning of the 5th, when his servant entered his room, he found his master lying lifeless on the bed, his face tranquil and bearing no trace of pain.

When, eighteen years later, Weber's remains were transferred to Dresden, Richard Wagner, in pronouncing a eulogium upon his memory, struck the right chord in laying particular emphasis upon the greatness of Weber's genius as that of an essentially German composer; and upon the beauty of his character, in its simple manliness, its tenderness, and its generosity.

II

Weber's career, as pictured in his music, is the story of the gradual development of a beautiful and even noble character in the teeth of untoward circumstances. That he was a man of the strength and individuality of Beethoven cannot be maintained. He was too easily influenced by his surroundings, and the better part of his genius was of slow growth, so that the history of his earlier days is at best unsatisfactory. He had everything to contend against that was likely to injure a character of singular gentleness and pliability. Alone of the great composers he had the misfortune of aristocratic birth, a misfortune not accompanied in his case by affluence or even moderate wealth.

Courts and princes had done their best to ruin Weber, but to his lasting credit he came unhurt from the ordeal. After such trying experiences he began a new life. He was no longer a parasite, dancing at-

tendance in the antechambers of royalty, but a musician, enthusiastic for his art and eager to perfect himself in all that could assist the development of his genius. He himself realized what an escape he had had. In his diary at the close of 1810 he wrote: "God has sent me many sorrows and disappointments, but he has also thrown me with good people, who have made life worth living. I can honestly say that within the last ten months I have become a better man."

In regard to Weber's position as a master, certain things seem to be clear. It is to be feared that he and his works are traveling fast in the direction of that honorable oblivion in which so many of the builders of modern music are shrouded. Even now he is greater by reason of his influence on the men who followed him than in his own actual achievement. A great name in musical history he must always be. His influence has been too far-reaching for him ever to miss the respectful homage of the student, but on the changing fashion of musical taste his hold is already but slight. In our own country he is known to-day chiefly by the "Freischütz" and "Oberon" overtures and a few grand arias for coloratura. In Germany the strong national color of "Der Freischütz" endears it to the popular heart, and the taste for male-voice choral singing preserves some of Weber's part-songs. But with these exceptions his position in his native land is very much the same as it is with us. It was inevitable that this should be so. For all the great work he did, for all his influence upon subsequent composers, Weber's music has not the qualities that make for immortality. Imagination, picturesqueness, charm—these

he has, but not that force, moral, emotional and intellectual, which animates the music of his great contemporary Beethoven, and through it speaks as plainly to us as it did to our forefathers, perhaps more plainly to us than it ever did to them.

What Weber has to say he says delightfully; it is his misfortune that what he has to say is for an age but not for all time. While Beethoven writes in music the emotions that are the common lot of man, Weber represents a passing phase, an attitude of mind sincere enough in itself but of necessity evanescent. That phase passes, another arises, and the poet speaks to deaf ears. Weber is primarily the musician of the romantic movement. He represents in music what his German contemporaries Tieck, Hölty and their coterie represent in poetry. It is not to be thought that romance had not touched music before; indeed music is in itself so essentially romantic that it seems absurd to tie the phrase down to a special period of musical history. The romantic movement, however, aimed definitely at certain things that were already the common property of art and literature, but had only appeared in music as it were by accident. It was a revolt against the tyranny of man and his emotions. It demanded a larger stage and an ampler air. Human passions were not to be the only subject for artistic treatment. Heaven and hell, nature and her mighty forces, the forests with their fauns and dryads, the ocean with its Nereids and Tritons, the demons of earth and air—all these were pressed into the service of art. The magical glory of landscape, the wonders of the setting sun, the horror of tempests, the glory of the dawn—all these the romantic movement taught men to regard not

as merely the accessories of a scene in which man was the predominant figure, but as subjects intrinsically worthy of artistic treatment.

Of the musical side of this movement Weber is the leading figure. His genius found its truest expression not in abstract music, though even here his work was valuable in the enlargement of the boundaries of classical form, but in opera. His early operas are comparatively unimportant; it was in "Der Freischütz" that his genius burst into full flower. The subject, carefully chosen by himself, lent itself well to romantic treatment. The mighty forest in the recesses of which the action passes is as it were the protagonist of the drama. Its solemn shadows lie over every page of the work. The opening notes of the overture breathe forth its mysterious charm. The voice of nature had never sounded like this in music before. In Beethoven's Pastoral symphony we have rather the emotion of man in contemplating nature. Weber gives us nature independent of any human interest.

More typical still of the romantic movement is Weber's handling of the supernatural element of the story. Demons and spirits were common enough in opera before his day, but their picturesque possibilities had scarcely been realized. Weber's incantation in the Wolf's Glen was something absolutely new to music; the conception of the scene is a proof of his imaginative audacity; its execution immortalizes his genius. There is another element in "Der Freischütz" that is scarcely less important than its opening of the treasure-house of romance, and that is its national flavor. Weber has been called the founder of national opera by reason of the designedly German color of much of

the music of "Der Freischütz." So in a sense he is, but he is almost more important as the inventor of the use of local color in music. Before his day opera had been a very cosmopolitan entertainment. Wherever the scene was laid the characters expressed themselves in much the same terms, and composers cared but little to give a distinctive flavor to their different works. Mozart cared so little about local color that though the action of "Don Giovanni" passes at Seville there is not a suspicion of Spanish coloring in the score, and the Don actually accompanies his serenade upon so characteristically Italian an instrument as the mandolin, instead of the national instrument of Spain, the guitar. In "Le Nozze di Figaro" it is true that there is a fandango, but there Mozart's experiments in nationalizing his music seem to have ended. Weber was the first composer to give realism to the scenes he was illustrating by infusing local color into his music. By so doing he has influenced the later developments of music perhaps even more profoundly than by his more definitely romantic tendencies.

In Weber's other works for the stage his romantic tendencies are no less plainly exhibited. The incidental music which he wrote in 1821 for "Preciosa" is a wonderful musical picture of Spanish gypsy life, while his overture to Schiller's "Turandot" is a curious attempt to convey a suggestion of Chinese coloring. "Euryanthe" and "Oberon," Weber's two last operas, both suffer from poor librettos, which have prevented them from retaining the place in popular affection to which their noble music entitles them. In "Euryanthe" he worked on a wider canvas than in "Der Freischütz." "Euryanthe" has none of the popular element which

counted for so much in the earlier opera. It is a tale of court and chivalry, of passion and intrigue, full of pomp and splendor, and painted with wide sweeps of the brush. Weber's music is perhaps the finest thing he ever did. It has less freshness and charm than "Der Freischütz," but it is far loftier and more ambitious in style, and there is hardly a touch of weakness in it from beginning to end. The influence of "Euryanthe" on later composers has been scarcely less far-reaching than that of "Der Freischütz." Wagner in his early days drew much on Weber; the idea of the "Tannhäuser" finale, with its contrast between one woman's voice and a chorus of men, was probably suggested by "Euryanthe," and the scene between Ortrud and Telramund in "Lohengrin" owes much to the music of Eglantine and Lysiart.

Planché cast his "Oberon" libretto into the form which was then popular in England, and it is rather a play with incidental music than a real opera. This is now much against its popularity, but it has recently been revived in Germany with a revised libretto, and perhaps in this form it may win more permanent success. It certainly is not Weber's fault that it has dropped out of the repertory. His music, though written when the hand of death was upon him, shows no failure in power. The fairy scenes in particular are exquisitely delicate and charming. Weber practically invented fairies in music, and no one—not even Mendelssohn, who copied him most faithfully—has ever treated them so sympathetically. The oriental scenes are admirable also. They must have appealed specially to Weber, who loved to introduce exotic as well as coloring into his music, and here used several Arabian

and Turkish melodies with capital effect. But "Oberon" is throughout a bewildering succession of lovely scenes, sometimes not very closely connected, but always entrancing in themselves. It shows the range of Weber's genius perhaps more than any other of his works, and particularly his marvelous power of transmuting into music the sights and sounds of nature.

Weber's writings for the pianoforte are valuable historically for their enlargement of the boundaries of form and for the importance they assign to technique, though in the latter respect they but faintly foreshadow the astounding developments of modern times. The "Concertstück" marks an interesting stage in the history of programme music. It differs no less widely in form from all earlier concertos than in its illustration of a definite programme, confided by the composer to his pupil Benedict, without which it would be incomprehensible. It is thus something quite distinct from mood-pictures, such as Beethoven's orchestral works often are, in which the "programme" is, as a rule, entirely subservient to the musical form.

Weber's independent works for orchestra—his two symphonies and numerous concertos for various instruments—are not permanently valuable, but in the development of the science of orchestration his work can hardly be overrated. His extraordinary feeling for orchestral color was closely allied to the general romantic tendency of his genius. Not merely did he grasp the innate possibilities of each instrument and its special power of suggestion, but he used certain instruments and groups of instruments throughout his operas to indicate certain phases of feeling in a way

with which we are now familiar in the works of Wagner, but which then was something absolutely new to music. How large a part his mastery of orchestration played in his wonderful pictures of nature it is scarcely necessary to point out. With Weber the coloring was as integral a part of the picture as the design itself. It is possible that opinion may be divided upon the intrinsic value of his works, but it is unquestionable that he left opera something entirely different—in aim as much as in form—from what he found it.

ROSSINI

(1792-1868)



GIOACHINO ANTONIO ROSSINI

IT may be safely asserted that no composer ever enjoyed in his lifetime such a degree of popularity as did Rossini. At one time his music solely occupied nearly all the operatic stages of Europe, and none other would be listened to. His music appeals to the million, not alone to the educated class. It is perfectly natural, and in keeping with Rossini's character. Full of melody, sweet and beautiful, it never fails in its purpose of captivating. No one, probably, could listen to the "Stabat Mater" without becoming an admirer of Rossini, or without experiencing a feeling of enjoyment, as page after page of its music glides on, gratifying the listener with its suavity, and leaving the mind impressed with the sense of the pleasure which such agreeable music has aroused. Ulibishev once declared that when listening for the first time to one of Rossini's operas, he forgot, for the time being, all that he had ever known, admired, played, or sung—it seemed as though he had never heard music before.

It was on February 29, 1792, that Gioachino Antonio Rossini first saw the light, at the small town of Pesaro, Italy, where his father, Giuseppe Rossini, was herald, or town-crier. He could also play the horn; and in

Signora Rossini the old man had married a singer of some pretensions, so the two were to be frequently met with at fairs and other musical gatherings—she sustaining small parts on the stage, while he played the horn in the orchestra. Their little son was to be brought up as a musician, and the parents soon commenced to train him. At seven years of age he made his début at Bologna. Paer's "Camilla" was produced there in 1799, and Gioachino was chosen to fill the part of the child. Beyond this incident little more is known of Rossini's early life, save that while a boy he joined his parents in their musical excursions, when he generally played second horn in the orchestra.

Soon he came under the notice of Tesei, of Bologna, who gave him lessons in pianoforte playing and singing, and put him in the way of earning money by singing solos at churches. It was this latter which led to the Countess Perticari's patronage. She had heard young Rossini sing, and loved his voice, so she sent him to the Lyceum at Bologna, there to study counterpoint and fugue at the feet of the strict Padre Mattei. A year's study, and he was chosen, at the age of sixteen, to write the cantata which was annually expected from the best pupil at the Lyceum. The result was "Il Pianto d'armonia per la morte d'Orfeo," which, on its production at Bologna, met with the greatest success. Passing over various juvenile efforts which followed it—such as "La Cambiale di Matrimonio," "L'equivoco stravagante," "L'Inganno felice," "L'occasione fa il Ladro," "Ciro in Babilonia," "La Scala di Seta," and "La Pietra del Paragone"—we come upon the first opera which made Rossini's name celebrated throughout Europe, that is, "Tancredi."

"Tancredi" was written for the Fenice Theater in 1813, and it at once laid hold of the Venetians. Its airs were sung everywhere, the gondoliers shaped them into serenades, and they even crept into the law courts, so that the judges had more than once to forbid their being hummed To this opera belongs the exquisite cavatina "Di tanti palpiti," far better known than is the little anecdote which gave to it the title of "aria de' rizzi." The day before the opera was to be given, Madame Malanotte took it into her head to dislike her opening air, insisting that Rossini must write another. He returned home from the rehearsal, and it is said that while the servant was preparing a dish of rice which he had ordered, Rossini noted down this beautiful air.

"L'Italiana in Algeri," written for the San Benedetto Theater at Naples, also came to light this year, and is important as being the first essay in that style which reached perfection in "Il Barbiere di Seviglia" (The Barber of Seville). It never met with any very great success. It was followed by "Aureliano in Palmira," which saw one representation and was withdrawn.

In the year of its production Rossini was visited by the famous impresario Barbaja, which led the composer to make a journey to Naples, where he shortly afterward made his début at the San Carlo, having signed a contract with Barbaja for several years, to conduct at his theaters, to write two new operas annually, and to rearrange the music of any old works to be produced; in return for which he was to receive 200 ducats a month, and a share in the profits of the San Carlo gaming-tables.

"Elisabetta" was the first opera composed here, and when it was produced in the autumn of 1815, found great favor with the warm Neapolitans; but, notwithstanding this and its beautiful music, it never traveled much farther than Naples.

Soon after this Rossini went to Rome, where he was engaged to write two works for the carnival of 1816, and thus were created "Torvaldo e Dorliska" and "Il Barbiere di Seviglia." Of "Torvaldo" nothing need be said but that it was not successful; but the immortal "Barber of Seville," his happiest effort, deserves much more attention.

Years before Rossini thought of "The Barber of Seville," Beaumarchais' subject had been set to music by Paisiello and had become celebrated throughout Italy, so that there was no small stir when it became known that the young Rossini had applied to Paisiello for permission to reset it. He was accused of presumption, but had no choice in the matter, having agreed to compose music to whatever text was supplied him. Paisiello having granted permission, Sterbini wrote a new libretto, and it was as different from Paisiello's as possible. It took Rossini but thirteen days to compose this masterpiece, during which time he never left the house of Zamboni (the original Figaro), where the work was done. As Sterbini handed him over the wet pages of the libretto, they were wedded to the joyous music, and then passed on to the copyists. "Not even did I get shaved," said Rossini to a friend. "It seems strange," was the reply, "that through 'the Barber' you should have gone without shaving." "If I had shaved," explained Rossini, "I should have gone out, and if I had gone out I should not have come back in time."

Donizetti, who wrote with even greater facility than Rossini, and is said to have composed the finest act of "La Favorita" in an evening after dinner, when told that Rossini had written "Il Barbiere" within this time, remarked, "Ah, possibly—*he is so lazy!*"

Every one knows the story of Rossini's so-called laziness, though it strikes one as being really a peculiar form of activity—how one day when he was writing in bed, and having finished a duet, let it drop on the floor. Rather than get up to recover it, he wrote another in its place. A friend came in, and Rossini asked him to fish for the sheet of paper under the bed. "I've written another," he said; "just listen and tell me which you think best." The composer sang the two, and as they both agreed that the first was the best, Rossini at once turned the second into a trio, then got up, dressed, and went out to breakfast with his friend.

On the night of the first representation of "The Barber" the Argentina Theater was crammed with friends and foes, the latter not hesitating to declare openly what they hoped and intended should be the fate of Rossini's "Barber." In his "History of the Opera" Sutherland Edwards gives an account of this first performance, and says the composer was weak enough to allow Garcia to sing beneath Rosina's balcony a Spanish melody of his own arrangement. Garcia maintained that, as the scene was in Spain, the Spanish melody would give the drama an appropriate local color; but unfortunately the artist forgot to tune his guitar before appearing on the stage as Almaviva. He began the operation in the presence of the public. A string broke. The vocalist proceeded to replace it, but before he could do so, laughter and

hisses were heard from all parts of the house. The Spanish air, when Garcia was at last ready to sing it, did not please the Italian audience, and the pit listened to it just enough to be able to give an ironical imitation of it afterward.

The introduction of Figaro's air seemed to be liked; but when Zamboni entered also with a guitar in his hand, a loud laugh was set up, and not a phrase of "Largo al factotum" was heard. When Rosina made her appearance in the balcony, the public were quite prepared to applaud Madame Giorgi-Righetti in an air which they thought they had a right to expect from her; but only hearing her utter a phrase w[illegible]d to nothing, expressions of disapprobation we[illegible] shouted out. The duet between Almaviva and Figa[illegible] was accompanied throughout with hissing and hoots. The fate of the work seemed now decided. At length Rosina came on, and sang the cavatina which had so long been looked for. Giorgi-Righetti was young, had a fresh, beautiful voice, and was a great favorite with the Roman public. Three long rounds of applause followed the conclusion of her air, and gave some hope that the opera might yet be saved. Rossini, who was at the orchestral piano, then turned toward the singer, and whispered his delight. This happy moment did not last, and the hisses recommenced with the duet between Figaro and Rosina. The noise increased, and it was impossible to hear a note of the finale.

When the curtain fell, Rossini turned toward the public, shrugged his shoulders, and clapped his hands. The audience were deeply offended by this open contempt for their opinion, but they made no reply at the time; the vengeance was reserved for the second act,

of which not a note passed the orchestra. The hubbub was so great that nothing like it had ever been heard at any theater. Rossini meanwhile remained perfectly calm, and afterward went home as composed as if the work, received in so insulting a manner, had been the production of some other musician. After changing their clothes, Giorgi-Righetti, Garcia, Zamboni, and Botticelli went to his house to console him in his misfortune. They found him fast asleep. But there were other troubles. Don Basilio, on entering, stumbled over a trap, which had been left open, bruising his face terribly, and appearing on the stage with his handkerchief up to his nose. The letter-duet miscarried in some way; and, to crown all, a cat appeared on the stage while the grand finale was going on, and in the attempts to drive it off, got so bewildered as to excite the laughter of the artistes themselves.

Such was the reception accorded to Rossini's happiest work on its first hearing. A week afterward it was applauded to the skies, and it was speedily played on every operatic stage in Europe.

This same year (1816) saw the production of another grand opera, "Otello," first brought out at Naples. Apart from its capital music, it is celebrated for Rossini's reforms in opera seria, which it marks. Its orchestration shows what strides the "innovations" were making. Moreover, in "Otello" there were other reforms, among which was the banishment of the pianoforte as an orchestral instrument, the accompaniments being played instead by the orchestra, and the increased importance given to the chorus. This opera much pleased the Italians, who considered it the *chef-d'œuvre* of lyric tragedy.

"La Cenerentola," another of Rossini's most successful operas, followed closely upon "Otello." It was written for the Teatro Valle, at Rome, where it was not very successful, though soon it became a favorite in all the capitals of Europe.

No sooner did Rossini get "La Cenerentola" off his hands than he fell to work upon "La Gazza ladra." It was written for the frequenters of La Scala, Milan, who were somewhat displeased at "Il Turco in Italia," their last opera from the maestro (1814). "La Gazza ladra" removed all this. Directly the overture was played, the whole of the Scala audience rose and greeted Rossini in the most enthusiastic fashion, calling out, *"Bravo, maestro!" "Viva Rossini!"* This was continued throughout the opera.

Next came "Armida," written for the opening of the San Carlo, Naples, after it was rebuilt, and notable as being the only one of Rossini's Italian operas containing ballet music; "Adelaida di Borgogna," for the 1817 carnival at Rome; and "Adina," for a Lisbon theater, all of which are now forgotten.

We now pass on to two far more important works—"Mosè in Egitto" and "Donna del Lago."

"Mosè" appeared in 1818 at the San Carlo, and proved a success, except at the crossing of the Red Sea, which nightly moved the audience to laughter, instead of producing the totally different effect Rossini had anticipated. Undoubtedly this scene spoiled the conclusion of the opera, and the maestro was at his wit's end to know how to remedy it; till one morning the librettist presented himself in Rossini's bedroom and suggested a prayer for the Israelites before and after the passage of the sea. Rossini at once saw the

use of it, and on looking over the words with which Tottola had provided him, exclaimed, "I will get up and write the music," and instantly jumping up, and sitting down in his shirt, he finished the piece in eight or ten minutes.

The same evening it was played with the opera, "when," says Stendhal, "the audience were delighted as usual with the first act, and all went well until the third, when the passage of the Red Sea being at hand, the audience as usual prepared to be amused. The laughter was just beginning in the pit, when it was observed that Moses was about to sing. He began his solo, 'Dal tuo stellato soglio' (To thee, great Lord). It was the first verse of a prayer which all the people repeat in chorus after Moses. Surprised at this novelty, the pit listened and the laughter entirely ceased. . . . It is impossible to imagine the thunders of applause that resounded throughout the house; one would have thought it was coming down. The spectators in the boxes standing up and leaning over to applaud called out at the top of their voices, *'Bello, bello! O che bello!'* I never saw so much enthusiasm nor such a complete success."

"La Donna del Lago" was brought out at the San Carlo, Naples, in October, 1819. It proved a signal failure on the first night, owing to its further new effects and innovations. Rossini went the same night to Milan, informing every one along the route that the new opera had quite delighted the Neapolitans! This proved to be true by the time he reached Milan, where upon his arrival he learned that at its second performance the San Carlo frequenters were in ecstasies over it.

Following "La Donna del Lago" came two works, "Bianca e Faliero" and "Matilda di Shabran," neither of which met with any fresh degree of success at their first representations. Of their after receptions Rossini did not stay to acquaint himself, but, with Mdlle. Colbran, took himself off to Bologna, where they were married by the archbishop in his palace. After a short stay at Bologna, Rossini and wife went to Vienna, where they met with a flattering reception. In this city Barbaja had an opera house; and it was for the purpose of conducting one of his new operas that Rossini visited the capital.

"Zelmira" was the title of the new work, and by some critics it is considered as the most satisfactory of his compositions with regard to invention and the ingenious manner in which the ideas are developed. It was successfully produced at Naples, and afterward at Vienna.

After the Vienna season Rossini returned to Bologna and produced "Semiramide," the last of his Italian operas. This was first performed at the Fenice Theater, Venice, February 3, 1823. It was not much liked, but the Venetians were wrong in their estimate of it. Time has declared it to be one of the finest of his works.

We now reach a new phase in Rossini's life—his English and French career. His first appearance in London was at the King's Theater, January 24, 1824, when he stood in the orchestra to direct "Zelmira." "When Rossini entered," says a writer of the time, "he was received with loud plaudits, all the persons in the pit standing on the seats to get a better view of him. He continued for a minute or two to bow respectfully

to the audience, and then gave the signal for the overture to begin. He appeared stout, and somewhat below the middle height, with rather a heavy air, and a countenance which, though intelligent, betrayed none of the vivacity which distinguishes his music; and it was remarked that he had more the appearance of a sturdy beef-eating Englishman than a fiery and sensitive native of the South." No one could have received more attention upon his arrival than did Rossini. He was presented to his Majesty (George IV) at the Pavilion at Brighton, where he found this monarch playing at écarté with a lady. Taking his arm the King walked with him to the concert-room to hear his band, which in compliment to Rossini had been ordered to play "The Barber" overture. The next piece his Majesty left to Rossini's selection, to which he replied with his natural good breeding, "If I might take the liberty of selecting the next piece it must be 'God save the King.'"

Rossini was a guest at the most fashionable houses, where his talents as a singer and performer on the pianoforte were always called into action. He had a fine tenor voice and sang with much taste, and was also a remarkable pianist. Auber once saw him play and said, "I shall never forget the effect produced by his lightning-like execution. When he had finished I looked mechanically at the ivory keys; I fancied I could see them smoking."

After one London season Rossini, with his wife, went to Paris. He soon perceived that the French were a more artistic people than the English; and one of the first proofs of this was his appointment as director of the Italian opera. With this and the

Académie, Rossini was associated till the year 1830, when the Revolution put an end for a time to all musical arrangements. For Paris Rossini wrote "Il Viaggio a Reims," "Le Siège de Corinthe," "Le Comte Ory," and "Guillaume Tell"—of which only the latter need be referred to.

"Guillaume Tell," Rossini's masterpiece, was first produced at the Académie Royale of Paris on August 3, 1829. It was partly successful, but after fifty-six representations it ceased to draw. Rossini had wedded his fine dramatic music to a somewhat imperfect libretto. The music had saved it for a time, but necessary revision was made. In its new form it soon blazed into great popularity. Fétis, the eminent Belgian critic, writing immediately after its performance, said: "The work displays a new man in an old one, and proves that it is in vain to pretend to measure the action of genius. This production opens a new career to Rossini."

This opera is full of melody. Whether in its solos, or its massive choral and ballet music, we meet alike with that fine stream of melody which runs through the whole. Its overture is a magnificent work of art. The opening andante carries the listener away to the peaceful regions of the snowy Alps. We see that nature is waking, and the hazy atmosphere clears off for the new-born day. In the next movement, this solitude is dispelled; a storm with thunder and lightning bursts upon us. But its fury is soon spent; the clouds clear away, and all is bright again. The shepherds are astir —and from the mountain sides come the peculiar notes of the "Ranz des Vaches" from their pipes. Suddenly all is changed. Trumpets sound a call to arms. Troops

are mustering, and the music cleverly marks their quick step as the soldiers and shepherd patriots march off to protect their country. A brilliant use of the instruments depicts the exultation of the victors upon their return, and their joyous shouts effectively close this grand tone-picture.

With this work Rossini's prolific career may almost be said to have ended—and this at the age of thirty-seven, when most great careers have but begun. Notwithstanding that he lived almost forty years longer, a few songs and small pieces, his "Stabat Mater" and the "Petite messe solennelle," are all he wrote. Why he sank into this retirement remains a mystery which may never be solved.

The "Stabat Mater" was originally written for a distinguished Spaniard, Señor Valera, but after his death Rossini secured it, and in 1842 it was publicly performed, bringing him fame as a Church composer. That it is a great work no one will doubt, nor would any one question the beauty and tenderness of the melodious music in it; but that there is a lack of devotional feeling and solemnity few would deny. Rossini's fame will rest on his operas, not on his contributions to Church music.

The "Petite messe solennelle" first came to light in 1864, when it was played at Paris before Auber, Meyerbeer, and other private friends. As a sacred composition it has not as much interest as the "Stabat," and can never become as popular as that favorite work.

The forty years of Rossini's retirement were spent partly in Italy, and in 1855 he returned to Paris to end his days. He had long been ailing before his death, but

it was only a fortnight or so prior to that event that his mortal illness began to show itself seriously. "The Swan of Pesaro," as his compatriots delighted to style him, died, after intense sufferings, November 13, 1868. After a grand funeral mass had been sung, his remains were borne from the Church de la Trinité to their resting-place in the cemetery of Père Lachaise, followed by an immense concourse of mourners of all ranks. Many celebrated musicians and singers were present. The most impressive part of the ceremony was the singing of the "Quis est homo," from the "Stabat Mater," by Adelina Patti and Alboni. To hear that beautiful music rendered by two such voices, and in the presence of such artists, over the grave of the composer, was to feel in the deepest sense the genius of Rossini, and to realize the part he had played in the musical history of his time.

Music, and especially operatic music, owes much to Rossini for the reforms that he made both in opera buffa and opera seria. He substituted singing for the endless recitatives of which Italian opera before him chiefly consisted; he brought the bass voice prominently to the front, and gave it a leading part; he banished the pianoforte from the Italian orchestras; he laid down the principle that the singer should sing the notes the composer had given him, without any flowery additions of his own; and he gave the chorus a much more important place in opera than it had ever held.

Rossini brought about a real orchestral advance in his own country. Every new instrument that was invented he found room for in his brilliant scores, despite the indignation of the Italian musicians. Hitherto

their orchestras had consisted almost solely of strings; what must have been their astonishment to see wind instruments added to such an extent! This is best conceived, perhaps, by Sigismondi's behavior on one occasion, when young Donizetti, then a student, pleaded to look at the Rossini scores at the Neapolitan Conservatory. That of "Otello" was selected, and the two sat down to examine it; but instantly old Sigismondi began raving about the "monstrous" score and its "buffooneries." Every instrument employed was severely commented upon; but when he came to the "wind" his indignation was terrible. Clarinets, bassoons, trombones, first, second, third, and fourth, had all been employed to swell a crescendo in one part; but when the fortissimo was reached, Sigismondi, it is said, uttered a cry of despair, struck the score violently with his fist, upset the table which young Donizetti had loaded with the productions of Rossini, raised his hands to heaven, and rushed from the room, exclaiming, "A hundred and twenty-three trombones! A hundred and twenty-three trombones!" Donizetti followed the enraged musician, and endeavored to explain the mistake. "Not a hundred and twenty-three trombones, but first, second, and third trombones," he gently observed. Sigismondi, however, would not hear another word, and disappeared from the library, exclaiming to the last, "A hundred and twenty-three trombones!"

Finally, it should be added that Rossini's music has been very differently estimated by various critics. Ingres, in whose view honesty in art held almost as high a place as genius or originality, has called it "the music of a dishonest man." Berlioz would gladly have

burnt it all, and Rossini's followers with it. On the other hand, Schubert—though fully alive to his weaknesses, as his caricatures of Rossini's overtures show, and with every reason to dislike him from the fact that the Rossini furor kept Schubert's own works off the stage—contrasts his operas most favorably with the "rubbish" which filled the Vienna theaters at that time, and calls him emphatically "a rare genius." "His instrumentation," he continues, "is often extremely original, and so is the voice writing, nor can I find any fault with the music [of 'Otello'] if I except the usual Italian gallopades and a few reminiscences of Tancredi." Mendelssohn too, as is well known, would allow no one to depreciate Rossini. Even Schumann, so intolerant of the Italian school, is enthusiastic over one of his operas, and calls it "real, exhilarating, clever music." Such exaggerations as those of Ingres and Berlioz are as bad as intentional injustice. It is necessary to recollect the difficult circumstances which surrounded an Italian composer in Rossini's day, and thereby to discover why so much of the music which was once so widely worshiped went out of fashion.

Rossini, as our sketch has shown, effected a complete revolution in the style of Italian opera. His accompaniments were richer than any that had ever been previously heard in Italy, and in their masterly instrumentation rivaled some of the most notable achievements of German art. His overtures are by far the most masterly and complete compositions of the kind that the Italian school has ever produced. In contrast with the dramatic art of Wagner, Rossini's work maintains for him a distinct position in the history of musical development.

SCHUBERT

(1797-1828)



FRANZ SCHUBERT

I

IN the central cemetery of Vienna there are two graves side by side. Over the one may be read the inscription "Beethoven," over the other "Schubert." And little as those among whom he lived believed it, we now know that there is not one of all the great musicians of the past to whom a place by the side of the great Beethoven could so fitly have been given as to poor Schubert.

Certainly he was one of the most luckless of all great artists, though the race has never been celebrated for good fortune. He was miserably poor, ugly, and uninteresting-looking. His finest compositions were utterly disregarded during his lifetime. He was never able to hear even an orchestral rehearsal of his grandest symphony, and after his death large bundles of his manuscripts were stuffed away and left to rot in a dark cupboard for many years, until discovered by Messrs. Schumann and Grove. He lived an utterly obscure life, his genius only recognized by a few faithful friends; and at the early age of thirty-one he passed away from the life that to him had been so weary and sorrowful.

The records of that life are very scanty; he wrote few letters, he did not move even to the extent to which

Beethoven did in those circles of society where a genius is talked about and his admirers treasure the recollection of his slightest word and deed; a few torn pages from his diary, two or three letters, the list and dates of his works, and above all, the works themselves—these are all.

Schubert's father was the parish schoolmaster at Lichtenthal, Vienna. He was twice married, and had a large family, of whom ten survived. Franz Peter, a child by the first marriage, was born January 31, 1797. As every child in Germany learns at school something of music, he very early picked up the rudiments of it, and at eight years of age his father began to teach him the violin. Singing he learned from Michael Holzer the choirmaster, whose testimony to the early display of talent by him is almost comically straightforward. He says: "Whenever I wished to teach him anything new, I found that he had already mastered it. Consequently I cannot be said to have given him any lessons at all. I merely amused myself and regarded him with dumb astonishment."

At the age of eleven a small piece of good fortune fell to him, for in a competition for the post of choirboy in the Imperial Chapel, he was the selected candidate, and this position entitled him to a free education in the Stadtconvict school. Soon afterward we find traces of his first compositions. In 1810 he wrote a pianoforte piece for four hands, bearing the remarkable title of "Leichenfantasie," or Corpse fantasia, and the next year he had ventured on an overture, a quinet, quartet, and other instrumental works, besides a long cantata-like piece, "Hagar's Klage." The last composition was seen by Salieri, who detected the

talent in it and sent the boy to Ruczizka for lessons in harmony. Ruczizka soon sent him back, saying, "He has learned everything, and God has been his teacher."

We know little of Schubert's home life at this time, but however straitened by poverty it was, it can hardly have been altogether unfavorable to the development of his musical powers. His father and brothers joined with him in quartets; his two brothers Ferdinand and Ignaz played first and second violins, Franz took the viola, and his father the violoncello.

The year 1813 was his last year at school, for, his treble voice breaking, he had to leave the Imperial Chapel and the school attached to it. In this year he wrote his first symphony in D, which was performed by the orchestra composed of members of the choir. A large number of songs, already showing the true Schubert style, were also produced about this time. After five years of training he was adrift again, and as he could obtain no other more congenial occupation he was compelled to spend the next three years as his father's assistant, teaching the poor children in the school the alphabet and a little arithmetic. But a long list of musical compositions is assigned to these years.

Schubert was throughout life exceedingly shy, and in general society was the reverse of brilliant, but he appears to have had rather a talent for forming intimate friendships with other young men, artists like himself. Mayrhofer, a poet, clever and hypochondriacal (who afterward committed suicide by throwing himself out of a window), many of whose poems Schubert set to music; Schober, an intense admirer of his friend's musical genius, and at whose house Schubert lived for a number of years; Johann Michael

Vogl, a celebrated baritone singer, who was of great use in introducing his songs to the public; Josef Hüttenbrenner—these and others formed an enthusiastic band of kindred spirits, who, over such potations as their scantily filled purses would permit of at the tavern in the evening, used to discuss art, philosophy, and life.

Some of Schubert's finest works were written during these three years of drudgery with the spelling-book and birch rod. His mass in F, which, with the exception of the one written in the last year of his life, is his best, was composed in 1814, and first produced at the centenary festival of his own parish church at Lichtenthal. Schubert himself conducted, and for once in his life must have tasted some of the sweets of triumph. Salieri, his old master, was present, and after the performance embraced him, saying, "Franz, you are my pupil, and will do me great honor";—and old Schubert, the schoolmaster, was so proud of his son's work that he made him a present of a five-octave piano on the occasion. During the same year, the music of a comic opera, "Des Teufels Lustschloss," was composed, but of this only the overture and first and third acts remain, as, with the same ill luck that befell so many others of his compositions, the second act of the unpublished score was afterward used by an ignorant servant of Josef Hüttenbrenner to light fires with.

The next year, 1815, while still engaged as the parish "dominie," Schubert wrote an almost incredible quantity of music. Two symphonies and six operatic works, two masses, nearly 150 songs, and a large amount of choral and chamber music were then com-

posed. The operas are hardly known at all, and indeed a great part of the score perished by the hands of the undiscriminating domestic of Hüttenbrenner's together with the one already mentioned.

One day Joseph Spaun, a friend of Schubert's, happened to call upon him, and found him in a state of the greatest excitement, muttering wildly to himself and pacing restlessly round the narrow circle of his room. He had been reading Goethe's magnificently weird "Erlking"; the idea of that terrible night-ride had taken possession of him, and the same day he wrote his famous setting of the song. It is rather provoking to think that Goethe himself never in the slightest degree acknowledged, or indeed had any idea of, the services which the then obscure Viennese composer rendered him. Schubert had an unbounded veneration for Goethe, and after setting a number of his finer songs to music, he sent these settings to the poet himself. But Goethe did not vouchsafe to take the slightest notice of this offering. It was only late in his life, when Schubert had been a long time dead and buried, that he at all was brought to change his mind. Madame Schröder-Devrient then sang the "Erlking" to him, and he had to confess its grandeur, saying, "I once heard this composition in my earlier life, and it did not agree with my views of the subject, but executed as you execute it, the whole becomes a complete picture." Surely, of all the strange reversals that "the whirligig of time" brings us, this is not the least strange—that many of Goethe's songs are now far better known as of Schubert's setting than as of Goethe's writing!

In 1818 Schubert's first opportunity came to him in

the shape of an offer from Count Johann Esterhazy—a member of a family always famous for its patronage of the arts—that the composer should be installed as master of music to the Count's family at a salary which, to Schubert, seemed princely, while he was to have the additional privilege of living in the Count's house. The latter part of this arrangement seems in some way to have fallen through, for in the following year we find Schubert living in Bohemian fashion with his friend Mayrhofer, the poet, in a small room in Vienna. One of the greatest advantages to Schubert from the Esterhazy connection was an intimacy formed with Baron Karl von Schönstein, the finest amateur singer of his day. He was very enthusiastic over Schubert's compositions, and made a point of singing them everywhere. This, at a time when publishers were exceptionally timid, was naturally of immense assistance to a young composer's reputation.

Save in the music that he constantly poured forth, there is little eventful to record in his life for the next few years. A comic opera, "Die Zwillingsbrüder," was accepted at the Kärnthnerthor Theater, and produced with moderate success; but the critics treated it rather contemptuously, as wanting in melody, and written in an old-fashioned style. Another opera, "Alfonso und Estrella," to a weak libretto by his friend Schober, was written in 1822. The year before, he wrote his seventh symphony in E, a work that, though fully sketched out, was for some reason that cannot now be ascertained never completed. Yet his memoranda for it are so full, that even now it would be an easy task for a competent musician to complete it. At one time Mendelssohn is said to have intended

doing this. Schubert's grandest unfinished symphony, however, was that in B minor, commenced in 1823. Of this only two movements are completed, and the work was not performed for many years after his death. It was first produced in Vienna in 1865, and soon afterward at the Crystal Palace in England, and since then has been frequently performed. All musicians now acknowledge it as one of the grandest and most lovely musical creations of the century.

In 1823 Schubert was asked to write the incidental music to a play by Helmine von Chézy, the eccentric and half-mad lady who wrote the stupid libretto of Weber's opera "Euryanthe." The overture, *entr'actes,* and ballet music to the piece, "Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus," were written by Schubert; but exquisite as his music was, the piece fell utterly flat, and was only twice performed. The critics again wrote with contemptuous indulgence. Every musician now knows and loves the exquisite "Rosamunde" music; and, even if Sir George Grove had done nothing else for music, his rescue of the forgotten manuscripts from a dusty cupboard at Dr. Schindler's, in Vienna, is enough to entitle him to lasting and grateful remembrance. Two more operas, composed about this time, "Fierabras" and "Der Häusliche Krieg," are very little known. The first was never performed or printed, the second has been occasionally performed; but, like all of Schubert's other operatic works, though full of melody, it is wanting in the dramatic symmetry required for successful stage representation.

Depressed and lonely as he was, as time went on, Schubert found the secret of happiness in himself—in work, by means of which he forgot and was raised far

above his troubles. In 1824 he writes to his brother Ferdinand: "Certainly the happy, joyous time is gone, when every object seemed encircled with a halo of youthful glory; and that which has followed is a miserable reality, which I endeavor, as far as possible, to embellish by the gifts of my fancy (for which I thank God). . . . I am now, much more than formerly, in the way of finding peace and happiness in myself. As a proof of this, I shall show you a grand sonata and variations upon an original theme, which I have lately composed." His exquisite set of songs, "Die Schöne Müllerin," many other songs, and sonatas, marches, and quartets, were written during this time of sadness and depression. There is also a strange "dream-story," found after his death among his papers, without any other writing to give a clew to its meaning. It is difficult to understand it all, though that it is meant to depict his own life, many touches, as, for instance, the pathetic allusion to his "Lieder," appear to indicate. Apart from its interest as a revelation of the musician's inner life, it has been said to be a fragment of wonderful beauty, worthy of Novalis or Jean Paul Richter.

In March, 1825, Schubert accompanied his friend Vogl, the singer, on an excursion through the Tyrol. His letters at this time are full of gaiety. Some of his most beautiful compositions, for example, the "Hymn to the Virgin," date from this holiday; and Vogl and he seem to have met appreciative people, to whose delight Schubert, shy as he was, was quite ready to minister by his playing.

From the Tyrol the two friends wandered on to Salzburg, and Schubert in his letters very graphically

describes the quaint old town, girt by the glorious mountains. He describes a visit to Michael Haydn's tomb, but, strangely enough, says nothing of Mozart, though Mozart was, next to Beethoven, his greatest favorite, and was born and had lived for many years in this town.

This journey was the last holiday among the mountains that he enjoyed, for though afterward we find him longing for another tour, his pecuniary means did not allow of it. Many as were his pieces that had now been published, he made little profit by them, and he was never successful in obtaining any of the posts as conductor or organist for which he on several occasions applied. Whether the latter failure was his own fault or not it is hard to decide; but, if a story told by Schindler, Beethoven's biographer (and not the most veracious of men, be it said), is to be believed, it was mainly attributable to his own obstinate opinionativeness. Schindler says that in 1826 the post of conductor to the Kärnthnerthor Theater at Vienna was vacant, and that Schubert, strongly supported by his friend Vógl, was a candidate. Some operatic scenes had to be set to music as a proof of the applicants' capacity. This Schubert had done, and Nanette Schechner was to sing the soprano part. "During the rehearsals," says Schindler, "the lady called the attention of the composer to some insurmountable difficulties in the principal air, and requested him to make curtailments and to simplify the accompaniment, which Schubert flatly refused to do. At the first orchestral rehearsal the artist endeavored in vain to master the air, and Schubert's friends begged him to make the required modifications, but without result.

He persisted in his determination. At the last rehearsal everything went smoothly until the air, when it happened as every one anticipated. The singer struggled hard with the weighty accompaniments, especially with the brass, but was fairly overpowered. She sat down on a chair by the proscenium quite exhausted. No one spoke, and despair was on every countenance. Meanwhile Duport, the manager, went from group to group and whispered mysteriously.

"As for Schubert, he sat motionless during this most unpleasant scene like a statue, his eyes fixed upon the score lying open in front of him. At length Duport advanced to the orchestra, and said very politely, 'Herr Schubert, we should like to postpone the performance for a few days, and I must request that you will make the requisite alterations in the aria, so as to render it easier for Fräulein Schechner.' Several members of the orchestra now entreated Schubert to yield; but his anger was only intensified by Duport's observations and these added entreaties, and exclaiming in a loud voice, 'I alter nothing!' he closed the book with a bang, put it under his arm, and strode away quickly. All hope of his appointment was of course abandoned."

It is right, in fairness to Schubert, to mention that Josef Hüttenbrenner, on the contrary, says that the singer was delighted with the air, and that Schubert's failure to obtain the appointment was solely due to intrigues at the theater.

Not long after this Schubert paid a last visit to Beethoven. He had previously called upon the great master with some of his own compositions, but though Beethoven had received him kindly, Schubert's great



SCHUBERT

nervousness and the awkwardness of writing everything in consequence of Beethoven's deafness, had prevented any close intimacy. We are told, however, that during his last illness Beethoven had perused a number of Schubert's songs with great delight, and had said of him, "Truly Schubert possesses a spark of the divine fire!"

When he heard of Beethoven's serious illness, Schubert once more mustered up courage to call upon the master whom he venerated so much, and it is said that as the dying man was then unable to speak, Schubert stood for some time in silence beside his bed. And when the funeral took place Schubert was one of the thirty-eight torch-bearers who stood beside the grave. Afterward he went with two of his friends to the Mehlgrube tavern, and wine was called for three. First they drank to the memory of the great departed genius, and then Schubert called upon his friends to drink to the one who should next be laid in the grave. The glasses were again filled, and Schubert, exclaiming, "Myself!" hastily drained his own and left the place. It may be that already he knew of the malady that in less than two years was to remove him.

Of these two years, save a few letters written at the time of a pleasant visit to some friends, almost the only record is in the catalogue of his works, but during this period some of his grandest compositions, the symphony in C, the mass in E, many of his most beautiful "Lieder," the "Winterreise," and others, and the exquisite pianoforte impromptus were written. He was never able during his life to gain a hearing for his great symphony; but it appears that public interest had by this time to some extent become aroused in his

favor, and we hear of a private concert on March 26, 1827, at a Musikverein, where the programme, entirely composed of his own compositions, was exceedingly successful.

But already symptoms of the illness destined to be at last fatal were exhibiting themselves; nervous headaches and rush of blood to the head, from which for some time he had occasionally suffered, were now more frequent and affected him more severely; yet to the very end he continued working. He had removed to his brother Ferdinand's house, and, this being new and damp, his health was unfavorably affected by the change. But he still was ardently contemplating future work, and indeed, on November 3, a few days before his death, he paid a visit to Sechter, a learned contrapuntist, to arrange for taking lessons from him.

A few days after this he began to complain of weakness and depression; he was not able to take food, and soon could not rise from his bed. But even then he continued his work. On the 17th he became delirious, and piteously supplicated his brother Ferdinand to help him. "What is going to happen to me? What are they doing to me?" When his brother and the doctor tried to inspirit him by speaking of his recovery, "No, no, here is my end!" he said. Then horrible fancies came to him; he thought he was being put in the tomb. "Oh! I entreat you to carry me to my room; don't, don't leave me in this hole in the earth! What! don't I deserve a place above ground?" They tried to assure him he was indeed in his own room, but his mind was wandering again. In a frenzy he cried out, "No, no, it's not true; Beethoven is not laid here!" But soon the last remnant of his strength

was gone, and very quietly he breathed his last, at three o'clock on the afternoon of November 19. His illness had only lasted a week.

The next day his friends came to the house and covered his coffin with wreaths, and placed a laurel crown upon his brow. On the 21st the funeral took place in the Währing churchyard, and Schubert was laid in his last resting-place, only separated by three graves from that of Beethoven. A concert was soon afterward given by his friends to raise the money to pay for a monument over his grave. Three hundred and sixty florins were realized, and with this sum was erected the monument that may now be seen with the first lines of Franz Grillparzer's poem engraved beneath the name of Schubert: "Here lies buried a rich treasure, and yet more glorious hopes."

But Schubert's greatness does not consist, as Grillparzer and his friends of the Viennese clique probably imagined, in the promise of great things that might have been accomplished in the future. He left work already done, symphonies, masses, chamber music, sonatas, and, above all, songs of imperishable worth, to which the world has long since accorded an assured place among the noblest of musical classics. Writing in 1838, Liszt, the greatest of modern pianists, said: "In the salons I have heard with the keenest pleasure, and often with an emotion bordering on tears, an amateur, the Baron Schönstein (a friend of the Esterhazy family, and always an admirer of Schubert), sing the 'Lieder' of Schubert—the musician most truly poet that ever lived!"

Years after his death Schumann discovered his great symphony in C, dusty and utterly forgotten, at

Vienna, and prevailed upon Ferdinand Schubert to send it to Mendelssohn at Leipzig, under whose baton it was first performed at the Gewandhaus concerts in that city. Other treasures have been since then unearthed from dusty cupboards and old lumber-rooms in Vienna, and Schubert's music is now played and sung everywhere at concerts and in drawing-rooms.

Schubert and song! These must ever be associated, and who, indeed, would wish to sever the tie? Song was the lifelong object of this true tone-poet; for it he strove, and, above all, he accomplished. Many may know him by other music, but the world at large knows him only by those inspiring melodies which enkindle all the emotions appertaining to human nature —love and hatred, joy and sorrow, hope and despair, consolation, resignation, and the like. His six hundred songs form a unique and precious bequest to music. Well has his work taken its place with the stately and strong columns on which the vast edifice of modern musical art rests—the symphonies and sonatas of Beethoven, the operas of Mozart, the oratorios of Handel, the chamber music of Haydn, and the songs of Schubert.

Schubert himself said, "For many many long years I sang my 'Lieder.' If I would fain sing of love, it turned to pain; if I would sing of pain, it turned to love." But from the sorrow of that obscure and lonely life has gone forth such music of consolation and gladness as the world can never tire of; from Schubert, the poor neglected musician whom so few knew and cared for while he lived, have come the many songs now piped or sung in Germany and in other lands, sweeter and more lovely than any known before.

II

Schubert was, to borrow the phrase used by Tennyson of A. C. Swinburne, "a reed through which all things blow into music." Music was his life-blood. He thought in music, felt in music, as no other composer has ever done. It was to him not merely a means of expressing emotion, it took the place of emotion itself. His fertility in musical ideas is unparalleled in the history of music. He had but to read a poem and its musical complement burst full-grown from his brain. He wrote music as other men write a letter—like Shakespeare, rarely blotting a line. As Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare, it would have been better for him had he blotted thousands. His very fertility was a snare. Had it been less easy to him to write music, he would have taken more pains to master the principles of technique, in which he was always deficient. Toward the close of his life he seems to have realized this himself. It appears that his friends had often held up Beethoven's laborious methods of composition before him as an example, and after Beethoven's death he studied the manuscript of "Fidelio" closely, comparing the different versions of various passages and tracing the gradual development of the composer's ideas. A short time before his death he became possessed of the scores of some of Handel's oratorios. A close study of these showed him how much he had to learn in the matter of counterpoint, and the result was his determination to take lessons with Sechter. While in his songs he is supreme, Schubert's lack of technical musicianship is often felt in his instrumental and choral works.

In his song work Schubert was far more than a mere melodist, though in this respect few composers have equaled him. Modulation was one of his favorite devices. Occasionally he carries his use of this device to extravagant lengths, but as a rule he uses it with exquisite discretion and with thrilling beauty and force. His accompaniments are individual and original, and are always adapted to the subject of the song in a masterly manner. In his earlier years he was addicted to romantic and picturesque subjects, but as he grew older he inclined more to songs of an intimate and personal character, such as his two great song-cycles "Die Schöne Müllerin" and "Die Winterreise," which deal in the subtlest fashion with the play of varying emotions and the development of feeling.

Apart from the intrinsic beauty of his songs, they are historically important as being practically the foundation of the school of modern German song-writing. In this respect Schubert's position has been admirably defined by Sir George Grove: "Songs there were before him, those of Schulz, for instance, and of Zumsteeg, which he so greatly admired, and of Haydn and Mozart—touching, beautiful expressions of simple thought and feeling. But the song, as we know it in his hands, full of dramatic fire, poetry, and pathos, set to no simple Volkslieder, but to long complex poems, the best poetry of the greatest poets, and an absolute reflection of every change and breath of sentiment in that poetry, with an accompaniment of the utmost force, fitness, and variety—such songs were his and his alone."

The Schubert whom we find in his songs is a nature of exquisite sensibility, responsive to every poetical

suggestion, alive to every claim for sympathy. This is the man viewed in relation to external circumstances; the inner man is pictured for us in his instrumental works, in which, unfettered by the claims of poetry, he poured forth his soul in music. And the picture is one of singular charm and attraction. We must not expect from Schubert the serene wisdom of Mozart nor the soaring imagination of Beethoven. Schubert had a gentle and childlike spirit, alert with noble impulses but restricted in its range. Schubert was not, like Beethoven, a great intellectual force. He died young, it is true, but his development was so rapid that his best work cannot be called immature, and there is nothing even in his latest productions that warrants us in assuming the probability of any further intellectual development. By a kind of superhuman instinct he divined in other men ideas foreign to his own nature and clothed them in fitting music. There is something almost miraculous in his setting of some of Goethe's lyrics, in the manner in which he keeps pace with the marvelous conceptions of that great poet; but his own music shows no attempt to face the baffling problems of life.

The charm of Schubert lies in his eternal youthfulness. He is the musician of springtime; the generous ardor of budding manhood bubbles in his strains. His greatest and most characteristic work, the symphony in C, is an Odyssey of youth. It pictures for us the feelings of a young man starting upon the pilgrimage of life. The spirit of romance hovers over the opening notes—that mysterious call which seems to summon man to put away childish things. The allegro is in very truth a "Song of the Open Road," with its gay

marchlike rhythm and the full-blooded enthusiasm that animates every note of it. The andante takes us further afield. We seem to follow our hero through the dim aisles of a forest, where sunlight and shadow alternately checker his path. How the leaves flicker and dance in the summer breeze, and how sweetly the mysterious depths of woodland solitude breathe their secrets in his ears! The scherzo touches a lighter note, and in the marvelous finale the noble ardor of youth seems kindled to a fever of passionate aspiration, not without a touch of strange yearning, a hungering for beauty that has a curious pathos of its own.

There is something singularly moving in the tenderness, purity, and boyish faith—almost credulity—revealed in this work. Happy Schubert to have died with his ideals unclouded by disillusion and remorse! Even when the bitterness of life and the cruelty of disappointment touch him, as in the first movement of the unfinished symphony in B minor, it is the unreasoning petulance of rebellious youth of which the music speaks, not, as in Beethoven, the grim tragedy of a man's sad war with fate. Similarly, in the famous slow movement of the quartet in D minor—the variations on the melody of "Death and the Maiden"—which is, as it were, a musical counterpart to the often pictured "Dance of Death," there is no suggestion of weird Holbeinesque horror. The attitude is rather that of the wide-eyed wonder of boyhood than the reasoned acquiescence and the serene fortitude of Beethoven and Mozart.

No musician was ever less of a teacher than Schubert. He lived in a world of his own apart from theories and dogmas, pouring forth the music that

was in him at the dictate of his own genius. If the romantic movement touched him, he was probably unconscious of it, and it is difficult to believe that in any circumstances he would have written otherwise than he did. Weber's literary attitude to music was impossible to him. He was a child of nature, singing as the linnets sing. Save in the realm of song, in which his influence has been inestimable, he contributed nothing to musical development. He appears to have had little dramatic instinct, and all the attempts that have been made since his death to restore his operas to the stage have failed; nor do his masses and other Church works appear to contain the germs of immortality. He was a born lyrist, and had he written nothing but his songs, his claim to rank among the great musicians would still be secure.

SPOHR

(1784-1859)



LOUIS SPOHR

THE first singer on the violin that ever appeared." Such was the judgment which the Italian critics declared when one of the truest of tone-poets first drew his bow to speak to, and kindle the emotions of, an audience in Italy. This was Ludwig, or, as he calls himself in his "Autobiography," Louis Spohr. Great as a composer, great as a violinist, and beloved as a man, he won the laurels of a master, and gained a place among illustrious musicians.

He was born at Brunswick, Germany, April 5, 1784. Both his parents were musical; his father, a physician, being an excellent flautist, while his mother possessed remarkable talent as a pianiste and singer. The boy had so long been teasing his father for a violin, that when he was six years old he presented him with his first instrument. It was never out of his hands, and he would wander about the house with it, endeavoring to play some of his favorite melodies.

Young Spohr received his first lesson on the violin from Dufour, an excellent amateur musician, who had settled at Seesen, in which town the Spohr family at that time resided. The progress the boy made fairly astonished Dufour, and induced him to ask the parents to allow the boy to devote himself entirely to music. This was agreed to, and the little fellow was delighted.

His progress was wonderful. He remained under the care of Dufour until he was about twelve years old, when, at his master's suggestion, he was sent to Brunswick, that he might there enjoy the advantage of better instruction. For this purpose he was placed under Kunisch, an excellent teacher of the violin, and under Hartung for harmony and counterpoint. Hartung soon died, and Spohr received no more theory lessons from any one. What he learned after this was from his own diligent study of scores of the great masters.

Spohr, now fourteen years old, was already an excellent solo-player; and his father was of opinion that he should now be maintaining himself; so accordingly the youth set out for Hamburg to try his fortunes there. His bright hopes were soon dissipated, and, with the little money remaining from that which his father had given him at starting, he sent his violin and other things on before him, while he, weary and footsore, trudged back to Brunswick. There he hit upon the idea of petitioning the Duke of Brunswick, who as he knew was a good amateur violinist. His petition was favorably received, and the Duke arranged a concert at the palace, at which Spohr was to play. Upon hearing him, the Duke was much pleased, and immediately secured for him a post in the orchestra. In 1802 the Duke placed Spohr under the care of Francis Eck, one of the finest violinists then living.

Shortly after, this master and pupil set out on an artistic tour, visiting, among other cities, Hamburg, Strelitz, Riga, and St. Petersburg; in all of which Spohr's fine playing won the admiration both of musicians and the public. In July, 1803, he returned

to his native town. During his travels he had not only wonderfully improved in his playing, but he had also made good progress as a composer, having published a concerto for the violin, and some duets, which had attracted much attention. Upon his return to Brunswick, therefore, he took the first opportunity of arranging a concert, so that his friends might see the progress he had made. The concert took place, and the Duke was so pleased that he appointed him first violinist in the court orchestra.

Soon after this Spohr made a tour to Leipzig, Dresden, and Berlin, where he charmed all who heard him, and gained fresh laurels as a composer, by producing his D minor and E minor concertos. In the spring of 1805 he had returned from this journey; but hardly had he settled down again before he received a letter inviting him to compete for the directorship of the ducal orchestra at Gotha, which had become vacant. Spohr was successful, and was duly introduced to his new duties.

At the house of Madame Scheidler, one of the court singers at Gotha, Spohr made the acquaintance of this lady's daughter, Dorette, an expressive and beautiful player upon the harp, whom he married in 1806. For many years his wife appeared with him in all his concerts, and for her he wrote a number of sonatas for violin and some solo pieces. An opera, "Alruna" (1808), was among the most important of his writings at this period, which, although he allowed it to disappear, possessed much that was good.

October, 1809, found Spohr and his wife again leaving home—this time for a journey to Russia. However, they had only proceeded as far as Breslau

when Spohr received a letter from the court chamberlain inviting them to return, and soon they were again in the court orchestra at Gotha. Here they remained for some time, during which Spohr was chiefly engaged in composition. Among the works of this time may be mentioned "Der Zweikampf mit der Geliebten," "Das jüngste Gericht," first performed at the festival held at Erfurt in 1812, in honor of Napoleon's birthday; a symphony, and some sonatas for the harp and violin.

In the autumn of 1812 Spohr and his wife went to Vienna, where they met with good success. While there Spohr was offered the directorship of the Theater an der Wien, at a salary three times the amount of that which he was receiving at Gotha. This offer he accepted and settled in Vienna.

In the midst of his new duties Spohr gave to the world two important works—his opera "Faust" and the cantata "Das befreite Deutschland" (The Liberation of Germany). "Faust" was composed for the Theater an der Wien, but was never performed till Weber brought it out at Prague in 1816. The cantata, which was written to celebrate the return of the army that had liberated Germany, did not get a hearing till 1815, on the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig.

The year 1815 brought with it a change in Spohr's arrangements. There had been a rupture between him and Count Palffy, the proprietor of the Theater an der Wien, which ended in their canceling their agreement. Now free, he decided on making a long journey, visiting Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. On March 18th Spohr, with his beloved Dorette and young family, bade adieu to Vienna.

It was late in the year 1817 before they returned from this long artistic tour, and on their way home Spohr received a letter inviting him to accept the post of director of the opera and music of the Frankfort Theater. He did so, and for nearly two years labored zealously to improve his new orchestra. "Zemire and Azor" was the most important work he produced during this period. This opera was first performed at the Frankfort Theater in April, 1819, under the composer's direction, and met with a most favorable reception. When it was produced at Covent Garden Theater, London, in 1831, it created a great stir in musical circles, and was the subject of much discussion. All were agreed that it had "melody in the richest profusion," but the prevailing opinion was that it was too "scientific."

While at Frankfort, Spohr received an invitation from the Philharmonic Society to come to London for the season of 1820, and appear at one of their concerts. Early in that year he and Dorette were in London, where he appeared at one of the society's concerts, playing a cantabile scena of his own composition, and also one of his quartets. While in London he composed his D flat symphony (Op. 49), which was interpreted for the first time by the orchestra of the Philharmonic Society at their concert of April 10, 1820, its composer wielding the baton. Most of the papers had something to say of the splendid new symphony and its brilliant performance. In London also Spohr gave a benefit concert, which proved quite advantageous to him.

With the London season over, Spohr visited several cities, giving successful concerts, and early in Decem-

ber, 1820, he was in Paris, where he made the acquaintance of eminent musicians.

On January 20, 1821, he made his début before a Parisian audience. The concert was given in the Grand Opera House, "and," says Spohr, "the satisfaction of the audience was unmistakably expressed by loud applause and shouts of 'bravo!'" This was the only concert he gave during this stay in Paris. He turned to his "dear Fatherland," and at Dresden busied himself with the composition of a ten-part vocal mass and a clarinet concerto in F minor.

On New Year's day of 1822 Spohr was in Cassel, where he became director of the orchestra of the Court Theater. At a grand dinner, amid songs, speeches, and toasts, Spohr was introduced to his new orchestra, to which he remained so brilliant and useful an ornament for over thirty years. Here his opera "Jessonda" was first performed July 28, 1823. The work was successful, and soon found a home on all the stages of Germany.

The oratorio "Die letzten Dinge" (The Last Judgment) came with the year 1826. On Good Friday of that year the Lutheran church of Cassel presented a most impressive appearance. It was evening. The sacred edifice was lighted up, and overhead hung an enormous cross covered with silver foil, from which were suspended hundreds of lighted lamps, shedding a brilliant ray of light upon the many hundreds of persons who filled the church. Here was heard, for the first time, Spohr's "Last Judgment." What must have been the thoughts of the congregation, as in the "solemn stillness" which Spohr says prevailed, and in the light of that emblem of Calvary overhead, they

awaited the solemn narrative! The performance was faultless, and the fame of "The Last Judgment" soon spread through Europe.

It is by no means a large work, containing in all but twenty-three numbers. All who have heard it must ever remember such inspirations as the opening chorus, "Praise the Lord our God," or "Destruction is fallen on Babylon," and "Great and wonderful," with its joyous "Hallelujah," two more of its finest choruses. Nor is the duet for soprano and tenor, "Lord, remember my affliction," or the air and chorus, "Holy, holy, holy," less charming. The oratorio is replete with such gems as these, and its many beauties combine to make it worthy of an honorable place among great works of its class.

Spohr was now assiduous at composition. After "Die letzten Dinge" came the B flat minor quintet, some quartets for strings, his third symphony—the C minor—the opera "Pietro von Abano," till we come to the opera of "Der Alchymist," first performed in Cassel July 28, 1830, where it was received with the greatest enthusiasm. With the year 1832 came another great work, the symphony "Die Weihe der Töne" (The Consecration of Sound), a composition which, some critics declare, would of itself have secured for Spohr a lasting fame. His "Violin School," finished in 1831, has remained a standard work of instruction for advanced students.

In the year 1834 a sad calamity overtook him—the death of his beloved wife, who succumbed to a fever on the 20th of November. Dorette's illness and death had interrupted Spohr's work upon his new oratorio, "Des Heilands letze Stunden" (Calvary), and it was

some time before he felt fit to resume his labors; but at length the work was finished, and on Good Friday, 1835, the oratorio was first publicly performed. "The thought," says Spohr, "that my wife did not live to listen to its first performance, sensibly lessened the satisfaction I felt at this, my most successful work." It was first heard in England at the Norwich Festival of 1839, and the success it then achieved was enormous, in spite of much opposition hurled at it from the Norwich pulpits on account of its libretto.

Two lonesome years had barely passed when Spohr began to long for another partner. This he found in the sister of his deceased friend Pfeiffer; and on January 3, 1836, their wedding took place. Soon after this, accompanied by his wife, more than twenty years younger than himself, he made a long journey, visiting many cities, in all of which he and his young wife, a brilliant pianist, were received with great rejoicings. In 1839 he gave to the world a work he had planned during this journey. This was another splendid orchestral composition—the "Historical" symphony, illustrating, in its first movement, the music and characteristics of the Bach-Handel period, 1720; in its adagio, the Haydn-Mozart period, 1780; and in its scherzo movement, the Beethoven period, 1810; while the concluding movement is devoted to illustrating the style and taste of playing at the time when the symphony was composed, 1838-39. The fame of it soon spread throughout Europe.

A pressing invitation from Professor Taylor brought Spohr again to England, to conduct the Norwich Festival of 1839; after which he returned to his home at Cassel, and set to work upon a new oratorio—"The

Fall of Babylon." This was completed in time for the Norwich Festival of 1842, but unfortunately Spohr could not obtain permission from his employer—the Elector of Hesse—to visit England to conduct its performance. The work was produced, nevertheless, under Professor Taylor's direction, when it met with a most satisfactory reception. The following year gave the Londoners an opportunity of hearing "Babylon" under the composer's direction—first at the Hanover Square Rooms, and shortly after at Exeter Hall, by the Sacred Harmonic Society. Spohr was greeted with extraordinary enthusiasm.

After this Spohr left London, crowds of people assembling to witness his departure. He arrived safely at his house at Cassel, with his thoughts busy about a new opera, "Die Kreuzfahrer" (The Crusaders), which was first performed on New Year's day, 1845. It was afterward presented in Berlin, but had no lasting success.

For Spohr the year 1847 opened brightly—it being the twenty-fifth anniversary of his connection with the Court Theater of Cassel; and a festival had long been talked about to celebrate the event; but, alas! it was also the year when his beloved friend, Felix Mendelssohn, closed his eyes forever. Spohr had returned from a happy visit to England when he received the sad tidings. In the midst of his grief, Spohr and his colleagues prepared a grand musical festival in memory of their departed friend, as the best tribute of affection they could pay to one whom they loved and admired so much.

The year 1850 is an important one, for it gave birth to another symphony by Spohr, "The Seasons," in

which the succession of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter is faithfully depicted. This was followed by Spohr's seventh quintet, in G minor, another string quartet—the 32d—and a series of pieces for the violin and piano; till, in 1852, he fell to work remodeling his "Faust." On July 15 "Faust" was successfully given in London, the composer conducting.

Spohr went again to London for the 1853 season, to conduct some of the New Philharmonic Society's concerts. This proved to be his last visit to England. He returned home and spent the next few years at Cassel, pursuing his court duties, and composing some new works. The masterly septet for piano, string and wind instruments, another violin quartet, and three duets for the violin were among his compositions up to the year 1855; and, notwithstanding that Spohr was now over seventy years of age, they are as charmingly fresh and original in character as are his earlier compositions.

But he lived to see the day when he could not give expression to the fancies and beautiful forms which occupied his brain. In 1857 he put his pen to his 34th quartet, but, alas! upon completion, it did not satisfy him. Again he tried it, but sorrowfully desired it never to be made public. The same with his tenth symphony. After he had heard it performed by his Cassel orchestra, it was condemned. In the same year he was pensioned off, much against his will. Nor was this all. He had the misfortune to fall and break his left arm, and never again did it recover its strength and elasticity so that he could play his beloved violin. His health began to trouble him, and he was getting weary of life now that he could do so little.

Two years passed thus, with but one important

incident—his last composition. In October, 1858, at the request of many friends, he set a song of Goethe's to music, and the long-silent piano in his room was once again unexpectedly heard throughout the house. This fragment was all it was needed for—the usual stillness returned, never to be again broken by Spohr.

In the spring of 1859 he journeyed to Meiningen, to direct a concert. A colossal bust of Spohr was placed upon the stage, surrounded and overhung with branches of palm and laurel. The conductor's desk also had been tastefully decorated by fair hands with ingenious devices and garlands of flowers. The house, filled to overflowing, awaited in breathless suspense the appearance of the master. "He comes!" was whispered through the spacious house, and a burst of welcome greeted the honored man from the assembled thousands. This was the last time he wielded the conductor's baton.

He returned to Cassel, and passed his time in reading, or in visiting the theaters and concerts. On the evening of October 16 he went to bed hoping for a good night's rest. He awoke too weak either to get up or to eat, and asked that his wife should sit on the bed beside him. He took her hand and kissed it tenderly. He remained for some days with life slowly ebbing away, surrounded by his family and those most dear to him, till, on the evening of October 22, 1859, he passed away.

Thus closed the long life of a man and an artist who had to the full developed the great talents and powers given him; who throughout a long career had lived up to the ideal he had conceived in youth; in whom private character and artistic activity corresponded to

a rare degree. His "Autobiography" bears the strongest possible testimony to his rare manly straightforwardness and sincerity in word and deed, and to the childlike purity of mind which he preserved from early youth to latest age. According to his lights he ever stood up for the dignity of his art, with the same unflinching independence of character with which he claimed, not without personal risk, the rights of a free citizen.

Spohr certainly was a born musician, second only to the very greatest masters in true musical instinct; in power of concentration and of work hardly inferior to any. But the range of his talent was not wide; he never seems to have been able to step out of a given circle of ideas and sentiments, and when he tried to enlarge his sphere, it was only to get hold of the outer shell of things, which he at once proceeded to fill with the old familiar substance. He never left the circle of his individuality, but drew everything within it. At the same time it must be confessed that he left much outside of that circle. To his violin concertos—and among them especially to the 7th, 8th, and 9th—must be assigned the first place among his works. They are only surpassed by those of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, and are probably destined to live longer than any other of his works. They are not likely to disappear soon from the repertoires of the best violinists.

As a man Spohr was universally respected, although, owing to a certain reserve in his character and a decided aversion to talking, he has not rarely been reproached with coldness and brusqueness of manner. At the same time he gained and kept through a long life certain intimate friendships and in many instances

showed great kindness to brother artists. That this was not incompatible with an extraordinary sense of his own value and importance is evident in every page of his "Autobiography," which is a most interesting and amusing work.

PAGANINI

(1784-1840)



NICCOLO PAGANINI

THIS remarkable man, the most famous of violin virtuosi, was born at Genoa, Italy, February 18, 1784. His father was a small tradesman, who, although quite uneducated, was a great lover of music, and a performer on the mandolin. He soon perceived the musical talent of his son, and began to instruct him at a very early age. He then handed him over to Servetto, and, for six months, to Costa, the principal violinist and conductor at Genoa. When eight years old he had already acquired considerable proficiency, and had also composed a sonata for his instrument.

In 1793 he made his first appearance in public at Genoa, and played variations on the air "La Carmagnole," then so popular, with immense success. He also used to play every Sunday a violin concerto in church, a circumstance to which Paganini himself attached much importance, as having forced him to the constant study of fresh pieces. About the year 1795 his father took him to Parma, with the intention of putting him under the famous violinist Alessandro Rolla. Paganini himself thus relates their first meeting: "Coming to Rolla we found him laid up. He appeared little inclined to see us, but his wife showed us into a room adjoining his bedroom, until she had spoken to him. Finding on the table a violin and the music of Rolla's

latest concerto, I took up the instrument and played the piece at sight. Astonished at what he heard, the composer asked for the name of the player; and when told that it was but a young boy, would not believe it until he had seen for himself. He then told me that he had nothing to teach me, and advised me to go to Paer for instruction in composition." Fétis, in his monograph on Paganini, maintains that this statement rests on a mistake, as Paer was then in Germany, and that it was under Ghiretti that Paganini studied for some time. It is also stated on good authority that for several months he had regular lessons from Rolla, and it is difficult to explain why he was in later years unwilling to acknowledge the fact.

Paganini was already bent on finding out new effects on the violin. After his return to Genoa he composed his first studies, which were of such unheard-of difficulty, that he himself is reported sometimes to have practised a single passage for ten hours running. That such intense study should have resulted in the acquisition of unlimited execution, but should also have affected his health, is not to be wondered at. Up to this time he appears to have been wholly under the control of his father, who was a harsh and rough man. The boy naturally wished to escape from what he considered intolerable slavery. Being allowed to travel for the first time alone to Lucca, where he played with immense success at a music-festival in November, 1798, he did not return home, but went on to Pisa and other towns. Although only fifteen, he had already begun to lead a dissipated life, in which gambling took a prominent part. Alternate fits of study and gambling, interrupted by periods of utter exhaustion and by

protracted illnesses, easily explain his frequent disappearances from public view, and his miserable health in later life. One day at Leghorn he gambled away everything he had, even to his violin. In order to enable him to appear at the concert, a M. Levron, an amateur, lent him a beautiful Josef Guarnerius; and after having heard him play on it, presented it to him. This was the instrument which Paganini used for the rest of his life in preference to any other. He bequeathed it to his native town of Genoa, and it is preserved in a glass case in the Municipal Palace. Another fine violin, a Stradivarius, was given to him by Pasini, a painter.

From 1801 till 1804 Paganini lived in absolute retirement at the château of a lady of high rank, devoting much time to the study of the guitar, the lady's favorite instrument. He there composed two sets of sonatas for guitar and violin (Op. 2 and 3). In 1804 he returned to Genoa, and for a year reapplied himself in an almost furious manner to the study of the violin. At this period he first learned to know the extravagant studies of Locatelli, especially his "Arte di nuova modulazione," and endeavored to emulate and outdo Locatelli's *tours de force*. He also composed three quartets for violin, viola, guitar, and cello (Op. 4), a second set of the same (Op. 5), and a set of variations di bravura with guitar accompaniment.

In 1805 he began again to travel. Wherever he played he excited unbounded enthusiasm. At Lucca he accepted an engagement as solo-player to the court, and as teacher to Prince Bacciochi, the husband of Napoleon's sister Elisa. It was there that he began his famous performances on the G-string alone. He

resided at Lucca till 1808, and during the next nineteen years gave hundreds of concerts in all parts of Italy—his fame and the enthusiasm for his art ever and ever increasing. At the same time he was not unfrequently attacked by jealous rivals, and altogether his life was not free from strange adventures. "One day at Leghorn"—so he himself relates—"a nail had run into my heel and I came on limping, at which the audience laughed. At the moment I was about to commence my concerto, the candles of my desk fell out. Another laugh. After the first few bars of my solo my first string broke, which increased the hilarity; but I played the piece on three strings, and the sneers quickly changed into general applause."

At Ferrara he had a narrow escape from being lynched. Enraged by a hiss from the pit, Paganini resolved to avenge the outrage, and at the end of the concert proposed to the audience to imitate the voices of various animals. After having rendered the notes of different birds, the mewing of a cat, and the barking of a dog, he finally advanced to the footlights, and calling out, "Questo è per quelli che han fischiato" (this is for those who hissed), imitated in an unmistakable manner the braying of a donkey. At this the pit rose to a man, rushed through the orchestra, climbed the stage, and would probably have killed Paganini if he had not taken to instantaneous flight. The explanation of this strange occurrence is, that the people of Ferrara had a special reputation for stupidity, and that the appearance of a Ferrarese outside the town was the signal for a significant "hee-haw." We may well believe that this was Paganini's last public appearance there.

At Milan his success was greater than anywhere else. He gave there in 1813 no less than thirty-seven concerts. In 1814, at Bologna, he first made the acquaintance of Rossini. In 1816 he met the French violinist Lafont at Milan, and had with him—quite against his wish—a public contest. Both played solos, and they joined in a concertante duet by Kreutzer. It does honor to Paganini's character that in relating the event he writes: "Lafont probably surpassed me in tone." That the victory after all rested with Paganini need hardly be added. A similar contest took place in 1817 at Placentia between Paganini and Lipinski. In 1827 Pope Leo XII conferred on him the order of the Golden Spur.

Hitherto Paganini had never played outside Italy. Encouraged to visit Vienna by Prince Metternich, who had heard and admired him at Rome in 1817, he repeatedly made plans for visiting Germany, but the wretched state of his health always prevented their execution. A sojourn in the delicious climate of Sicily at last restored him to comparative health, and he started for Vienna, where his first concert, March 29, 1828, created an unparalleled sensation. A perfect fever appears to have seized all classes of society: the shop windows exhibited hats, gloves, and boots *à la Paganini;* dishes of all sorts were named after him; his portrait was to be seen on snuff-boxes, and his bust on the walking-sticks of the Viennese dandies. He himself obtained the Grand Gold Medal of St. Salvator from the town, and the title of Virtuoso to the Court from the Emperor.

During the following years Paganini traveled in Germany, repeating his Vienna triumphs in all the

principal towns of the country, especially in Berlin, where he played first in March, 1829. On March 9, 1831, he made his first appearance at Paris in a concert at the Opera. His success was quite equal to any that he had had elsewhere. In the following May he went to London, and gave his first concert at the Opera House on June 3. Here he excited perhaps more curiosity than enthusiasm. He himself in a letter complains of the "excessive and noisy admiration" to which he was a victim in London, which left him no rest, and actually blocked his passage from the theater every time he played. "Although the public curiosity to see me," says he, "is long since satisfied, though I have played in public at least thirty times, and my likeness has been reproduced in all possible styles and forms, yet I can never leave my home without being mobbed by people who are not content with following and jostling me, but actually get in front of me, and prevent my going either way, address me in English, of which I do not know a word, and even feel me, as if to find out if I am flesh and blood. And this not only the common people, but even the upper classes."

The financial results of his concerts in London, the Provinces, Scotland, and Ireland, were very large. He repeated his visits in the following two years, played at a farewell concert at the Victoria Theater, London, June 17, 1832, and then returned to the Continent in possession of a large fortune, which he invested chiefly in landed estates. The winter of 1833 he passed in Paris, and it was early in January, 1834, that he proposed to Berlioz to write a concerto for his Stradivarius viola, which resulted in the symphony called "Harold en Italie." For the next two years his favor-

ite residence was the Villa Gaiona near Parma. But his eagerness to amass money did not allow him to rest or attend to his health. In 1836 he received an invitation from Paris to take part in a money speculation on a large scale. It was proposed to establish, under the name Casino Paganini, in a fashionable quarter of Paris, a large and luxurious club—ostensibly with the view of giving concerts, but in reality for gambling purposes. Unfortunately he could not resist the temptation to embark in so doubtful an enterprise. The club-house was opened, but the gambling license was refused, and the concerts alone did not nearly cover the expenses of the establishment. Paganini hurried to Paris to save the concern, if possible, by appearing in the concerts. But he arrived in so exhausted a state that he could not play. The company became bankrupt, and he himself suffered a personal loss of 50,000 francs. He remained in Paris for the winter of 1838, and it was on December 18 of that year that he gave Berlioz 20,000 francs, as a mark of his admiration for the "Symphonie fantastique."

The annoyance arising from the unfortunate affair of the casino greatly increased his malady, which was phthisis of the larynx. Seeking relief in a warmer climate, he went to Marseilles, and stayed for some time in the house of a friend. Here, although almost a dying man, he would now and then take up his violin or his guitar, and one day even played his favorite quartet—Beethoven's F major, Op. 59, No. 1. On the approach of winter he went to Nice. Here his malady progressed rapidly; he lost his voice entirely, and was troubled with an incessant cough. He died May 27, 1840, at the age of fifty-six.

A week before his death the Bishop of Nice sent a priest to convey to him the last sacrament. Paganini, not believing that his end was so near, would not receive it. The wording of his will, in which he recommends his soul to the mercy of God and fixes a sum for masses to be said for its repose, proves his adherence to the Catholic Church. But as the priest did not return, and as Paganini in consequence died without the rites of the Church, the bishop refused him burial in consecrated ground. The coffin remained for a long time in a hospital at Nice; it was afterward removed to Villafranca, and it was not till 1845 that Paganini's son, by a direct appeal to the Pope, obtained leave to inter it in the village church near Villa Gaiona.

He left to his son Achille a large fortune. Although as a rule chary with his money, he was occasionally very generous, as his gift to Berlioz, already mentioned, shows. The mystery which surrounded Paganini the man no doubt helped to increase the interest taken in the artist. The strangest rumors accompanied him wherever he went. It was commonly reported that he owed his wonderful execution on the G-string to a long imprisonment, inflicted on him for the murder of a rival in love, during which he had a violin with one string only. Paganini himself writes: "At Vienna one of the audience affirmed publicly that my performance was not surprising, for he had distinctly seen, while I was playing my variations, the devil at my elbow directing my arm and guiding my bow. My resemblance to the devil was a proof of my origin." But even sensible and educated people believed that Paganini had a secret which enabled him to execute what appeared impossible to any other player. In fact

he has been suspected to have himself originated such rumors. As there was no doubt an admixture of charlatanism in the character of this extraordinary man, he may perhaps at first have done so. But on the other hand, he more than once contradicted them. At Prague he actually published a letter from his mother to disprove the rumor that he was the son of the devil; and at Paris he furnished Fétis with all the necessary material and dates to refute publicly the numberless absurdities circulated about him. This was done by a letter inserted in the "Revue musicale," but it availed little. Fétis, in his monograph on Paganini, by establishing the chronology of his travels and his sojourns at various places, proves clearly that he could not have suffered a lengthened imprisonment. It was not only the perfectly novel and astonishing character of his performances, but to a large extent his extraordinary ghostlike appearance, which caused these absurd rumors. His tall, skeleton figure, the pale, narrow, wax-colored face, the long dark hair, the mysterious expression of the heavy eye, have often been described.

But after all, the extraordinary effect of his playing could have had its source only in his extraordinary genius. If genius, as has been justly remarked, is "the power of taking infinite pains," he certainly showed it in a wonderful degree in the power of concentration and perseverance which enabled him to acquire such absolute command of his instrument. Mere perfection of technique, however, would never have thrown the whole of musical Europe into such paroxysms. With the first notes his audience was spellbound; there was in him—though certainly not the evil spirit suspected by the superstitious—a demonic element which ir-

resistibly took hold of those that came within his sphere. "His constant and daring flights," writes Moscheles, "his newly discovered flageolet tones, his gift of fusing and beautifying subjects of the most diverse kind—all these phases of genius so completely bewilder my musical perceptions that for days afterward my head is on fire and my brain reels." He was no "mere virtuoso"—there was a something in his playing that defied description or imitation, and he certainly had in a high degree originality and character, the two qualities which distinguish genius from ordinary talent.

His tone was not great: it could not be, for the one reason that the constant use of double harmonics and other specialties of his style necessitates very thin strings, which again preclude the production of a large and broad tone. But even his severest critics have always granted that his cantilena was extremely expressive. "I never wearied of the intense expression, soft and melting as that of an Italian singer," says Moscheles again. Spohr, in his "Autobiography," says of him: "The execution of his left hand and his never-failing intonation appeared to me as much as ever deserving admiration. In his compositions, however, and in his style of playing, I find a strange mixture of true genius and want of taste," etc. A distinguished English amateur, who heard him at York in 1832, writes in a letter, full of enthusiasm: "In the concerto on the fourth string he contrived to give some passages a tremulous sound, like the voice of a person crying. He makes great use of sliding his fingers along the strings—sometimes producing a most beautiful, at other times laughable effect." "Paganini,"

says Thomas Moore, "abuses his powers; he *could* play divinely, and *does* so sometimes for a minute or two; but then come his tricks and surprises, his bow in convulsions, and his enharmonics, like the mewlings of an expiring cat." Here no doubt is an explanation, and to a certain extent a justification of Spohr's criticism. The frequent use of tremolo and of sliding indicate an impure style, which ought not to serve as a model; it was Paganini's style, founded on the man's inmost nature, which was as peculiar and exceptional as his talent. Spohr's criticisms—sincere enough, but often biassed and narrow—prove nothing more than that Paganini was no scion of the classical school of Viotti and Rode. In fact he belonged to no school. He followed the bent of his individuality, in which the southern element of passion and excitement was very strong, and showed itself in a manner which to a colder northern taste appeared exaggerated and affected.

The main technical features of Paganini's playing were an unfailing intonation, a lightning-like rapidity on the finger-board and with the bow, and a command of double stops, harmonics, and double harmonics, hardly equaled by any one before or after him. He also produced most peculiar effects, which for a long time puzzled all violinists, by tuning his violin in various ways. He was not the first to adopt this trick, but no one before him had made any extensive use of it.

In his interesting "Anecdotes of Great Musicians," W. Francis Gates gives us an account of Paganini's method of study that may well be considered by all students of music:

"We can hardly realize at this day of the world the

furore created by the marvelous performances of Paganini. The gaunt, cadaverous figure, the eccentric poses, the bewitching music, the undreamed-of technique, seconded by the terrible tales which had been circulated about his selling his soul to the devil in exchange for his wonderful powers—all this created such an interest and excitement as has hardly been paralleled in musical records.

"Various fiddlers whom he put sadly in the shade would have almost sold their souls to have captured the secret of his absolutes. One of them went so far as to follow him from place to place, hoping to get an inkling of the magic that Paganini used. This man would even engage an adjoining room at the hotel where Paganini was staying, and kept up an unceasing espionage over the virtuoso, even going to the length of peering through the keyhole of the latter's room. On one occasion, when so engaged, he saw Paganini take up his instrument and place it in position as though about to play, but, greatly to his disappointment, not a sound did the player make. He simply moved his left hand up and down the neck for a few moments, as though studying positions, then laid it aside, and that was all.

"During his youth Paganini was made to practise many hours per day, and the severe training that he was put through at that time, together with his phenomenal genius for his instrument, so settled his technique that it was not necessary for him to keep a severe and arduous course of practice with fixed regularity. Even when rehearsing with the orchestra, beyond a few isolated snatches, more often than not played pizzicato, he rarely ever played through those

compositions which, at his concerts, delighted and astonished his audiences.

"But while his technical practice was largely finished in his youth, he was throughout his whole life an earnest student. The works which he performed were such as to demand constant study, for he constantly added new compositions to his repertoire, all of which he memorized. He studied them as one would study a poem, committing them to memory line by line and stanza by stanza, thus relieving himself of constant repetitions. He would so impress the notes, dynamic marks, and bowing upon his memory, that when he came to give the work audible expression, it remained only to apply the physical machinery he could so well control to its demonstration. At the proper moment every note appeared in its place with fitting finish and expression, although the artist may not previously have traced the combinations upon his instrument. An active and discriminating intelligence was at the root of all of his musical performances."

MEYERBEER

(1791-1864)



GIACOMO MEYERBEER

THE famous dramatic composer Giacomo Meyerbeer was born in Berlin, Germany, of Jewish parents, September 5, 1791. His father, Herz Beer, a native of Frankfort, was a wealthy banker in Berlin; his mother was a woman of rare intellectual gifts. He was their eldest son, and was called Jacob Meyer Beer, a name he afterward contracted and Italianized into Giacomo Meyerbeer. His genius showed itself early. When hardly more than an infant he was able to retain in memory the popular tunes he heard, and to play them on the piano, accompanying them with their appropriate harmony. His first instructor was Lauska, an eminent pianoforte player, and pupil of Clementi; and old Clementi himself, although he had long given up teaching, was so much struck, during a visit to Berlin, with the promise displayed in the boy's performance as to consent to give him lessons.

As early as seven years old he played in public, and two years later was reckoned one of the best pianists in Berlin. It was as a pianist that he was expected to win his laurels, but as he had also shown much talent for composition, he was placed under Zelter for instruction in theory, and subsequently under Bernard Anselm Weber, director of the Berlin Opera. Weber was an inspiring companion, but not a competent theoretical teacher for such a pupil. The boy brought

one day to his master a fugue on which he had expended an unusual amount of time and pains. Weber, proud and joyful, sent off the fugue as a specimen of his pupil's work to his old master, the Abbé Vogler, at Darmstadt. The answer was eagerly looked for, but months elapsed and nothing came. At last there appeared—not a letter, but a huge packet. This proved to contain a long and exhaustive treatise on Fugue, in three sections. The first was theoretical, setting forth in rule and maxim the "whole duty" of the fugue-writer. The second, entitled "Scholar's Fugue," contained Meyerbeer's unlucky exercise, dissected and criticised, bar by bar, and pronounced bad. The third, headed "Master's Fugue," consisted of a fugue by Vogler, on Meyerbeer's subject, analyzed like the preceding one, to show that it was good.

Weber was astonished and distressed, but Meyerbeer set to work and wrote another fugue, in eight parts, in accordance with his new lights. This, with a modest letter, he sent to Vogler. The answer soon came: "Young man! Art opens to you a glorious future! Come to me at Darmstadt. You shall be to me as a son, and you shall slake your thirst at the sources of musical knowledge." Such a prospect was not to be resisted, and in 1810 Meyerbeer became an inmate of Vogler's house.

Here Meyerbeer had for companion Karl Maria von Weber, and between the two sprang up a lasting friendship. Each morning after early mass, when the young men took it in turns to preside at the organ, they assembled for a lesson in counterpoint from the Abbé. Themes were distributed, and a fugue or sacred cantata had to be written every day. In the

evening the work was examined, when each man had to defend his own composition against the critical attacks of Vogler and the rest. Organ fugues were improvised in the cathedral, on subjects contributed by all in turn. In this way Meyerbeer's education was carried on for two years. His diligence was such, that often, when interested in some new branch of study, he would not leave his room nor put off his dressing-gown for days together. His great powers of execution on the pianoforte enabled him to play at sight the most intricate orchestral scores, with a full command of every part.

His four-part "Sacred Songs of Klopstock" were published at this time, and an oratorio of his, entitled "God and Nature," was performed in presence of the Grand Duke, who appointed him composer to the court. His first opera, "Jephthah's Vow," was also written during this Vogler period. A comic opera, "Alimelek, or the Two Caliphs," failed at Munich. It was, however, put in rehearsal at Vienna, whither Meyerbeer now repaired, with the intention of making his appearance there as a pianist. But on the very evening of his arrival he chanced to hear Hummel, and was so much impressed by the grace, finish, and exquisite legato-playing of this artist that he became dissatisfied with all he had hitherto aimed at or accomplished, and went into a kind of retirement for several months, during which time he subjected his technique to a complete reform, besides writing a quantity of pianoforte music, which, however, was never published. He made a great sensation on his first appearance. In 1815 Meyerbeer went to Venice. It was carnival time. Rossini's "Tancredi" was then

at the height of its pristine popularity. To Meyerbeer it was a revelation. He had no style of his own to abandon, but he abandoned Vogler's, and set to work to write Italian operas. His success was easy and complete. "Romilda e Costanza" (produced at Padua in 1815), "Semiramide riconosciuta" (Turin, 1819), "Eduardo e Cristina" and "Emma di Resburgo" (Venice, 1820) were all received with enthusiasm by the Italian people.

In 1823, while engaged in writing "Il Crociato in Egitto," the composer went to Berlin. This was a time of transition in his life. He was wearying of the Italian manner, and he could not be insensible to the murmurs of dissatisfaction which everywhere in Germany made themselves heard at the degradation of his talent by his change of style. Foremost among the malcontents was K. M. von Weber, who had looked on his friend as the hope of that German opera in which were centered his own ardent aspirations. In spite of this the friendship of the two men remained unshaken.

"Il Crociato" was produced at Venice in 1824, and created a furor. In this opera, written in Germany, old associations seem to have asserted themselves. In 1826 he was invited to witness its first performance in Paris, and this proved to be the turning-point of his career. He eventually took up his residence in Paris, and lived most of his subsequent life there. From 1824 till 1831 no opera appeared from his pen. A sojourn in Berlin, during which his father died, his marriage, and the loss of two children, were among the causes which kept him from public life. But in these years he undertook that profound study of

French character, French history, and French art, which resulted in the final brilliant metamorphosis of his dramatic and musical style, and in the great works by which his name is remembered.

Paris was the headquarters of the unsettled, restless, tentative spirit which at that epoch pervaded Europe—the partial subsidence of the ferment caused by a century of great thoughts, ending in a revolution that had shaken society to its foundations. Art was a conglomeration of styles of every time and nation, all equally acceptable if treated with cleverness. Originality was at an ebb. Men turned to history and legend for material, seeking in the past a torch which, kindled at the fire of modern thought, might throw light on present problems. This spirit of eclecticism found its perfect musical counterpart in the works of Meyerbeer.

Many vicissitudes preceded the first performance, in 1831, of "Robert le Diable," the opera in which the new Meyerbeer first revealed himself, and of which the unparalleled success extended in a very few years over the whole civilized world. It made the fortune of the Paris Opera. Scenic effect, striking contrast, novel and brilliant instrumentation, vigorous declamatory recitative, melody which pleased none the less for the strong admixture of Italian-opera conventionalities, yet here and there (as in the beautiful scena "Robert! toi que j'aime") attaining a dramatic force unlooked for and till then unknown, a story part heroic, part legendary, part allegorical—with this strange picturesque medley all were pleased, for in it each found something to suit his taste.

The popularity of the opera was so great that "Les

Huguenots," produced in 1836, suffered at first by contrast. The public, looking for a repetition, with a difference, of "Robert," was disappointed at finding the new opera quite unlike its predecessor, but was soon forced to acknowledge the incontrovertible truth that it was immeasurably the superior of the two. As a drama it depends for none of its interest on the supernatural. It is, as treated by Meyerbeer, the most vivid chapter of French history that ever was written. The splendors and the terrors of the sixteenth century—its chivalry and fanaticism, its ferocity and romance, the brilliance of courts and the "chameleon colors of artificial society," the somber fervor of Protestantism—are all here depicted and endued with life and reality, while the whole is conceived and carried out on a scale of magnificence hitherto unknown in opera, in spite of some banalities.

In 1838 the book of "L'Africaine" was given to Meyerbeer by Scribe. He became deeply interested in it, and the composition and recomposition, casting and recasting of this work, occupied him at intervals to the end of his life. His excessive anxiety about his operas extended to the libretti, with which he was never satisfied, but would have modified to suit his successive fancies over and over again, until the final form retained little likeness to the original. This was especially the case with "L'Africaine," subsequently called "Vasco da Gama" (who, although the hero, was an afterthought!), and many were his altercations with Scribe, who got tired of the endless changes demanded by the composer, and withdrew his book altogether; but was finally pacified by Meyerbeer's taking another libretto of his, "Le Prophète," which

so forcibly excited the composer's imagination that he at once set to work on it and finished it within a year (1843).

A good deal of his time was now passed in Berlin, where the King had appointed him kapellmeister. Here he wrote several occasional pieces, cantatas, marches, and dance music, besides the three-act German opera "Das Feldlager in Schlesien." The success of this work was magically increased, a few weeks after its first performance, by the appearance in the part of the heroine of a young Swedish singer, introduced to the Berlin public by Meyerbeer, who had heard her in Paris—Jenny Lind. His duties at the opera were heavy, and he had neither the personal presence nor the requisite nerve and decision to make a good conductor. From 1845 he only conducted—possibly not to their advantage—his own operas, and those in which Jenny Lind sang.

The year 1846 was marked by the production of the overture and incidental music to his brother Michael's drama of "Struensee." This very striking work is its composer's only one in that style, and shows him in some of his best aspects. The overture is his most successful achievement in sustained instrumental composition. A visit to Vienna and a subsequent sojourn in London occurred in 1847. In the autumn he was back in Berlin, where, on the occasion of the King's birthday, he produced, after long and careful preparation, "Rienzi," the earliest opera of his future rival and bitter enemy, Richard Wagner. The two composers had seen something of one another in Paris. Wagner was then in necessitous circumstances, and Meyerbeer exerted himself to get employment for him,

and to make him known to influential people in the musical world. Subsequently, Wagner, while still in France, composed "Der Fliegende Holländer," to his own libretto. The score, rejected by the theaters of Leipzig and Munich, was sent by its composer to Meyerbeer, who brought about its acceptance at Berlin. Without claiming any extraordinary merit for these good offices of one brother-artist to another, we may, however, say that Meyerbeer's conduct was ill-requited by Wagner.

"Le Prophète," produced at Paris in 1849, after long and careful preparation, materially added to its composer's fame. Thirteen years had elapsed since the production of its predecessor. Once again the public, looking for something like "Les Huguenots," was disappointed. Once again it was forced, after a time, to do justice to Meyerbeer's power of *transferring himself*, as it were, according to the dramatic requirements of his theme. But there are fewer elements of popularity in "Le Prophète" than in "Les Huguenots." The conventional operatic forms are subordinated to declamation and the coherent action of the plot. It contains some of Meyerbeer's grandest thoughts, but the gloomy political and religious fanaticism which constitutes the interest of the drama, and the unimportance of the love-story (the mother being the female character in whom the interest is centered) are features which appeal to the few rather than the many. The work depends for its popularity on coloring and chiaroscuro.

Meyerbeer's health was beginning to fail, and after this time he spent a part of every autumn at Spa, where he found a temporary refuge from his toils and

cares Probably no great composer ever suffered such a degree of nervous anxiety about his own works as he did. During their composition, and for long after their first completion, he altered and retouched continually, never satisfied and never sure of himself. During the correcting of the parts, the casting of the characters, the "coaching" of the actors, he never knew, nor allowed any one concerned to know, a moment's peace of mind. Then came endless rehearsals, when he would give the orchestra passages scored in two ways, written in different colored inks, and try their alternate effect; then the final performance, the ordeal of public opinion and of possible adverse criticism, to which, probably owing to his having been fed with applause and encouragement from his earliest years, he was so painfully susceptible that, as Heine says of him, he fulfilled the true Christian ideal, for he could not rest while there remained one unconverted soul, "and when that lost sheep was brought back to the fold he rejoiced more over him than over all the rest of the flock that had never gone astray."

Faithful to change, he now challenged his adopted countrymen on their own especial ground by the production at the Opéra Comique in 1854 of "L'Étoile du Nord." To his book he had intended to adapt the music of "Das Feldlager in Schlesien," but his own ideas transforming themselves gradually while he worked on them, there remained at last only six numbers of the earlier work. "L'Étoile" achieved considerable popularity, although it aroused much animosity among French musicians, jealous of this invasion of their own domain, which they also thought unsuited to the melodramatic style of Meyerbeer. The

same may be said of "Le pardon de Ploermel" (Dinorah), founded on a Breton idyl, and produced at the Opéra Comique in 1859. Meyerbeer's special powers found no scope in this comparatively circumscribed field. The development of his genius since 1824 was too great not to be apparent in any style of composition, but these French operas, although containing much that is charming, were, like his Italian "wild oats," the result of an effort of *will*—the will to be whomsoever he chose.

After 1859 he wrote, at Berlin, two cantatas, and a grand march for the Schiller Centenary Festival, and began a musical drama—never finished—called "Goethe's Jugendzeit," introducing several of Goethe's lyrical poems, set to music. His life was overshadowed by the death of many friends and contemporaries, among them his old coadjutor, Scribe, to whom he owed so much.

In 1861 he represented German music at the opening of the London International Exhibition by his "Overture in the form of a March." The next winter he was again in Berlin, still working at "L'Africaine," to which the public looked forward with impatience and curiosity. For years the difficulty of getting a satisfactory cast had stood in the way of the production of this opera. His excessive anxiety and fastidiousness resulted in its being never performed at all during his lifetime. In October, 1863, he returned, for the last time, to Paris. The opera was now finished, and in rehearsal. Still he corrected, polished, touched, and retouched: it occupied his thoughts night and day. But he had delayed too long. On April 23, 1864, he was attacked by illness, and on May 2 he died.

"L'Africaine" was performed after his death at the Académie in Paris, April 28, 1865. The work has suffered somewhat from the incessant change of intention of its composer. The original conception of the music belongs to the same period as "Les Huguenots"—Meyerbeer's golden age—having occupied him from 1838 till 1843. Laid aside at that time for many years, and the book then undergoing a complete alteration, a second story being engrafted on to the first, the composition, when resumed, was carried on intermittently to the end of his life. The excessive length of the opera on its first production (when the performance occupied more than six hours) necessitated considerable curtailments detrimental to coherence of plot. But in spite of all this, the music has a special charm, a kind of exotic fragrance of its own, which will always make it to some minds the most sympathetic of Meyerbeer's works. It is, in fact, the most purely *musical* of them all. None is so melodious or so pathetic, or so free from blemishes of conventionality; in none is the orchestration so tender; it may contain less that is surprising, but it is more imaginative; it approaches the domain of poetry more nearly than any of his other operas.

It is common to speak of Meyerbeer as the founder of a new school. Fétis affirms that whatever faults or failings have been laid to his charge by his opponents, one thing—his originality—has never been called in question. "All that his works contain—character, ideas, scenes, rhythm, modulation, instrumentation—all are his and his only."

Between this view and that of Wagner, who calls him a "miserable music-maker," "a Jew banker to

whom it occurred to compose operas," there seems an immeasurable gulf. The truth probably may be expressed by saying that he was unique rather than original. No artist exists that is not partly made what he is by the "accident" of preceding and surrounding circumstances. But on strong creative genius these modifying influences, especially those of contemporary art, have but a superficial effect, wholly secondary to the individuality which asserts itself throughout, and finally molds its environment to its own likeness.

Meyerbeer's faculty was so determined in its manifestations by surrounding conditions, that, apart from them, it may almost be said to have had no active existence at all. He changed music as often as he changed climate, though a little of each of his successive styles clung to him till the last. A born musician, of extraordinary ability, devoted to art, and keenly appreciative of the beautiful in all types, with an unlimited capacity for work, helped by the circumstance of wealth, which in many another man would have been an excuse for idleness, he seized on the tendencies of his time and became its representative. He left no disciples, for he had no doctrine to bequeath; but he filled a gap which no one else could fill. His characters stand out from the canvas with—his contemporary eulogists say—the vividness of Shakespeare's characters; we should say rather of Scott's. The literary analogue to his operas is to be found, not in tragedy, they are too realistic for that, but in the historical novel. Here the men and women of past times live again before our eyes, not as they appear to the poet, who "sees into the life of things,"

but as they appeared to each other when they walked this earth. This is most compatible with the conditions of the modern stage, and Meyerbeer responds to its every need.

It is consistent with all this that he should have been singularly dependent for the quality of his ideas on the character of his subject. His own original vein of melody was limited, and his constructive skill not such as to supplement the deficiency in sustained idea. He often arrests the attention by some chord or modulation quite startling in its force and effect, immediately after which he is apt to collapse, as if frightened by the sudden stroke of his own genius. The modulation will be carried on through a sequence of wearisome sameness, stopping short in some remote key, whence, as if embarrassed how to escape, he will return to where he began by some trite device or awkward makeshift. His orchestral coloring, however, is so full of character, so varied and striking as to hide many shortcomings in form. In these days of Richard Strauss and overwhelming orchestras, it scarcely seems possible that Meyerbeer should be classed as an orchestral genius; but he was decidedly an originator in this field, and many who have abused him have copied some of his orchestral devices—Wagner not excepted.

In some moments of intense dramatic excitement he rises to the height of the situation as perhaps few others have done. His very defects stand him here in good stead, for these situations do not lend themselves to evenness of beauty. Such a moment is the last scene in the fourth act of "Les Huguenots," culminating in the famous duet. Here the situation is supreme, and the music is inseparable from it. Be-

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yond description, beyond criticism, nothing is wanting. The might, the futility, the eternity of Love and Fate —he has caught up the whole of emotion and uttered it. Whatever was the source of such an inspiration (and the entire scene is said to have been an afterthought), it bears that stamp of truth which makes it a possession for all time. If Meyerbeer lives, it will be in virtue of such moments as these. And if "Le Prophète" may be said to embody his intellectual side, and "L'Africaine" his emotional side, "Les Huguenots" is perhaps the work which best blends the two, and which, most completely typifying its composer, must be considered his masterpiece.

Presenting, as they do, splendid opportunities to singers of dramatic ability, his operas hold the stage, in spite of the exacting character which renders their perfect performance difficult and very rare. They will live long, although many of the ideas and associations which first made them popular belong already to the past.

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